

NO DARKNESS AT ALL

by JAMES W.
KENNEDY

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*"Ya ha pasado el mito en cuanto
a la presencia del Protestantismo
en la America Latina"*

—John A. Mackay, 1976


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The symbol of the World Council of Churches is a ship with a cross for a mast. The ship is the Church of Christ with his cross as its masthead, sailing on the sea of our troubled times. The Greek word *Oikoumene* means the whole inhabited earth. The circular form of the symbol signifies the worldwide mission of the Christian church.

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NO DARKNESS AT ALL

*A Report and Study Guide on the
Third Assembly of the World Council
of Churches, New Delhi, India,
November 19–December 5, 1961*

BY JAMES W. KENNEDY

With an Introduction by Roswell P. Barnes

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*That which we have seen and heard
declare we unto you, that ye also may
have fellowship with . . . the Father, and
with his Son Jesus Christ. . . . This then
is the message which . . . we declare unto
you, that God is light, and in him is no
darkness at all.*

1 John 1:3-5

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INTRODUCTION

This book is intended to help the average American church member to gain a sense of participation in the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches. That event, which occurred halfway around the world, doubtless seemed quite remote from the life and work of a local church in this country. Newspapers, magazines, television, and radio carried reports; but this description of the Assembly provided by Dr. Kennedy so promptly will help to bring the church member and the Assembly closer together.

The average church member participated in the Assembly formally through the delegates of his denomination who acted on his behalf, just as the citizen participates in the processes of government through the representatives he and his neighbors elect. Another form of organizational participation lies in the financial support of the World Council by the member churches which, in turn, are supported by local congregations. Still another kind of participation, though less formal, is perhaps more important for the person who could not actually attend the sessions in New Delhi: the imaginative participation by which the individual identifies himself with the discussions, the problems and decisions, the hopes and fears of the Assembly. To this last kind of participation the reader is invited.

During the year before the Assembly met, many local churches conducted study groups which used the pre-Assembly booklet, *Jesus Christ, the Light of the World*. Sharing in the use of this document with Christians in many nations and different kinds of churches encouraged a sense of participation in preparation. The text was translated into 33 different languages and was distributed in more than 600,000 copies, 200,000 of which were used in the United States.

At an even deeper level, many millions participated in the Assembly through prayer. A special prayer for use at the Opening Service of the Assembly, made available to local churches in advance, helped them realize a united fellowship with the delegates at New Delhi. A vast number of people, including many in non-member churches, interceded for the Assembly in private devotions and public corporate worship on their own initiative.

Unless the sense of responsible participation by church members is extended, the World Council of Churches may become little more than a meeting forum and co-ordinating agency for denominational leaders. It will serve its purpose adequately only when the people in the churches have a vivid sense of responsible participation in it.

Obviously, therefore, it is important for the average church member to know what the Council is and how it operates, especially at its Assembly, when major lines of policy are established and the organizational operations reviewed. It is urgently hoped that many local churches will use this book as an aid to study, having available also the official texts of the Message and the Section Reports of the Assembly to be published.¹

No Darkness at All is not so much a critical analysis as it is a report of the experience of the Assembly, including its perplexities and frustrations as well as its achievements. It gives a good impression of the processes by which the Assembly operated, the variety of occasions where personal associations contributed to what is called the "ecumenical encounter" of people and churches. It gives an impression of the mutual challenge of different patterns of thought which prevail among churches of various confessions and cultural backgrounds. It calls attention to the stimulation of unaccustomed emphases in worship which are sometimes perplexing and frustrating, sometimes inspiring.

It is hoped that the reader will not be content merely to absorb new information. Facts are important, to be sure. An understanding of what the World Council did and said is essential. But the individual church member should derive more than information from his identification with the Assembly, and this will be acquired only by reflective and prayerful thought. Then, *in absentia*, he will begin to see things in ecumenical perspective by vicarious experience.

¹*New Delhi Speaks*, the Message of the Assembly and the Section Reports. A Reflection Book, Association Press, 291 Broadway, New York 7, N. Y. 50¢ per copy. Special rates for quantity orders.

Ecumenical experience should contribute to a fuller appreciation of the total enterprise of the whole Church of Christ in all places, among all kinds of people. As the true meaning of the Church is realized, the importance of the local manifestation of that Church becomes more apparent. The significance of membership in the local congregation which worships in a particular structure at the corner of Main Street and First Avenue derives from the fact that that church is a part of the whole Church of Christ and that through it the member is a part of the vast company of those who have found life through the one Lord and Savior.

Ecumenical experience should lead to a better understanding of the gospel. Magnifying the emphases of one's own confessional tradition may lead to a neglect of aspects of the gospel which have been emphasized in other traditions. As the various emphases are brought together they tend to correct one another and to help each to achieve new insight through association with the others.

Ecumenical experience should lead to a deeper experience of the grace of God in Christ. Such experience may result from many different kinds of situation and association. There is always a sense of wonder, for example, when one discovers a sense of intimate comradeship with people coming out of unfamiliar confessional, racial, and national backgrounds with their distinguishing marks of color, dress, language, social habit, and religious practice. Or to take another illustration of the deepening of the experience of God's grace, it is inspiring to come into association with one who has met hardship and tragedy in life under appalling circumstances and who, nevertheless, reveals the triumphant and buoyant spirit of a victorious faith.

The reader should therefore expect to find in this identification with the World Council Assembly new dimensions of insight and new richness in his Christian faith and experience. The ecumenical movement, with the World Council as its principal instrument, is not intended to be merely an adjustment of the pattern of church relationships but an instrument for the renewal of the spiritual vitality of the churches and for more effective witness by all professing Christians.

ROSWELL P. BARNES

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE
WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
IN THE UNITED STATES

PART I



WHERE WE MET

The differences in setting for the three assemblies of the World Council of Churches are most striking. In 1948 we met in the elegant Concertgebouw, built for elite musical events in Amsterdam. In 1954 the cavernous space of a university field house, McGaw Hall, swallowed us up in the heat of Evanston. In 1961, under ideal weather conditions, we found our meeting place in New Delhi just about perfect, with practically everything at the Third Assembly arranged to take place under one roof.

All general sessions of the Third Assembly were held in the magnificent modern Vigyan Bhavan, built originally for UNESCO meetings. This beautiful and functional building housed all the Assembly activities, and had everything, from an efficient cafeteria to the finest radio recording studios. The main auditorium was fitted with large comfortable armchairs and individual desks equipped with receivers and microphones so that each delegate could hear the proceedings in his own language or speak from his seat by simply pressing a button on the nearest microphone.

A large *Oikoumene*¹ symbol, in white letters on a dark blue background, furnished the back drop for the Presidium, the officers and the participants for each session, all of whom were seated behind a series of desks lined up across the front center of the stage. The speaker's podium was to the left of the platform, with a smaller version of the World Council symbol on front and side.

¹See inside front cover.

An important part of the work of the Assembly was translating all addresses and discussions into the three official languages, English, French, and German, as well as into Russian and Spanish, simultaneously. Housed in glass-fronted booths in the main hall and in all assembly rooms, the interpreters were on the alert to pick up every word and translate it immediately. When any delegate spoke in a language other than English, there was a rush for the earphones to clamp over head and ears, and many of the delegates so adorned, with earphones askew, were comical sights indeed.

Because of space limitations in the Vigyan Bhavan, a *shamiana* was put up in a large parklike area just behind it for the larger public meetings. *Shamiana* means tent or covering. The one at New Delhi was like an extensive flat awning held up by a forest of poles, with what looked like oriental rugs tied together overhead, and with windbreakers of varied colors closing in the *shamiana* on all sides. The dirt floor underneath, only partially covered with straw matting, and the incessant sound of birds outside, gave a quiet pastoral atmosphere to the whole setting, even though it was in the middle of a great city.

The opening and closing services, the open communion service, the dramatic presentation of the report on Interchurch Aid and Service to Refugees, a number of meetings for visitors only, and several special programs, were all held in the *shamiana*. The large open-air tent was softly lighted for the night meetings, with the yellow glow bringing out the colors in the canvas topping and siding, but it was always cold. After the sun went down each evening before six o'clock, the temperature dropped sharply to as low as 40°. Those who forgot their topcoats were uncomfortably chilly.

A large white cross, reaching from the floor almost to the top of the *shamiana*, was erected front center, a little to the right of the speaker's platform, flanked by the two choirs—one for leading the Western-style music, the other for singing Indian music. The most unusual part of the worship services in "the tent" was the Indian hymns sung to native tunes, accompanied by a hand-pumped harmonium, flutes, bells, strings, tambourine, and the sharp click of two sticks struck together. This music brought forth a joyous response, with many from other lands joining in the unfamiliar but catchy and easy to sing melodies, tapping their feet to the contagious rhythm.

The erection of the *shamiana* was worthwhile for the several larger meetings held there, but more so because it gave a touch of

local color to the Assembly which was typically Indian and deeply appreciated. It was lighted every night and furnished a cheerful light as we went forth in the darkness each evening to find our buses, lined up between the Vigyan Bhavan and the *shamiana*.

So the official representatives of the member churches met in New Delhi, out of many nations, for the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches. One glance at the array of delegates, advisers, observers, youth participants, and guests, including spouses, noting their dress and ethnic characteristics, was sufficient to know that here was assembled a sampling of the world's life, a cross section of humanity. This first impression was reinforced daily. It soon became quite clear that here was gathered a sampling of God's entire creation in miniature, meeting in what for many was a strange land, but meeting not as strangers. About one third of those present had been together in previous ecumenical meetings, a few were ecumenical pioneers and veterans, going back before the World Council came into being, while the rest, even though newcomers, soon felt at home with their fellow Christians, and after a few days there were truly no more strangers.

On the whole the operation of the Assembly went very smoothly, but in one area it went completely haywire: housing. Those who arrived thinking they would be assigned to "luxury" hotels were more than mildly surprised when they were placed in what to them were primitive and almost unbearable accommodations. Many were at first shocked over the lack of what they considered to be absolute minimum facilities, without private toilets and baths, in some instances with no running water and very little hot water. However, after a few days most of the complaints gave way to second thoughts, helped by a reduction of board and room costs for those who were poorly housed, and almost everyone adjusted happily, slightly ashamed of their first reactions.

There were amazing sights to see in New Delhi on a morning's walk from any hotel to the Vigyan Bhavan. One morning as I walked the pleasant mile briskly, with the temperature around 50°, I noticed and recorded all these incidents: men and women performing their ablutions wherever water could be found, in fountains and ditches; a barber at work under a tree shaving an early customer—both squatting; Sikh taxi drivers putting away their beds and bedrolls, grooming their beards, braiding them on top of their heads, twisting on their colorful turbans; the street sweepers at work with nothing but handleless brooms stirring up dust;

loaded bandy carts jogging along briskly to market; women workers walking erect with baskets balanced on their heads, their grace of movement to be envied, whether carrying flowers or cow dung; men walking and bicycling with their dhotis and scarfs drawn tightly around them to protect against the morning chill; whole families camped alongside city streets; scavenger crows pecking at filth; crowded buses careening around traffic circles; horns forever honking and bleating; and an occasional Muslim woman with her face carefully veiled.

The warm midday time was best in New Delhi and the Indians were drawn to the sunny, grassy spots for eating, visiting, and just doing nothing, inevitably squatting or sitting or stretched out prone. A few men and dogs were always to be found lying "dead" in the sun soaking up the warmth for the cold to come with the setting sun.

One of the most enjoyable events of the Assembly was the reception given in the grand manner by the President of the Republic of India at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, his official residence. This palatial building, with its 347 rooms, is a page-out of British history, rivaling Buckingham Palace in beauty and spaciousness. Originally built for the Viceroy's residence, it is one of the great group of buildings designed for New Delhi by Sir Edwin Lutyens. A round parliament building and twin secretariat buildings are all placed at one end of a long and spacious tree-lined boulevard, with India Gate, the War Memorial Arch, at the other end.

The reception was held in the magnificent and formal Moghul Gardens, with fountains and flowing water everywhere in typical Moghul fashion. In the absence of the President, because of illness, we were received by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the Vice-President, one of the most distinguished of Indian intellectuals, who was formerly Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions in the University of Oxford. His entrance was heralded by a fanfare of trumpets, and he came in with quiet grace and dignity, preceded by two handsome young officers, and followed by members of the presidential bodyguard.

The members of the splendidly garbed guard were on duty everywhere, from the mounted ones in front of the Rashtrapati Bhavan to those standing at attention about every ten feet in double rows along the garden walks. Composed of Jats, Sikhs and Rajputs, each man chosen for his handsome appearance, stately bearing, and horsemanship, the tradition goes back over two hundred years to what was formerly the Viceroy of India's bodyguard.

Refreshment tables were nearby with uniformed attendants as

colorfully attired as the guards. There was also a band playing loudly by a splashing fountain. No one who attended will ever forget it. During the one-hour-long party, the Vice-President walked slowly among the people and greeted many of them with a word and a handshake. He had tea in the center of the garden with the presidents of the World Council and the officers of the Central Committee, along with the General Secretary. It was dusk before we left, and the oriental lampposts were already shining their brightly reflected light on the many waters.

While our setting was New Delhi, India, centered in a meeting hall and a tent, and our movements were limited to a narrow lane of shuttling back and forth between where we lived and where we met, vastly more important were the larger aspects of an Asian setting for an ecumenical meeting.

The continent of Asia covers a vast area of land and contains an incredibly large number of people. Stretching from the Red Sea eastward to the Pacific Ocean and from the southernmost tip of Ceylon on the Indian Ocean to the hard-frozen Arctic, it includes one eleventh of the earth's surface and a billion of its people, with India, China, and a large segment of Russia massed together.

This continent is populated largely with people of other than Christian faiths, living on an underdeveloped land, with problems of illiteracy, insufficient means of production, a staggering population explosion, poverty, disease, starvation, and a desire for independence from Western domination and freedom from Eastern interference, infiltration, and encroachment.

India is a large part of this Asian turmoil, a land of many complexities with a maze of unsolved problems, where Christianity is only a small but influential two and a half per cent of its four hundred and fifty million people. This mass of people may be divided religiously roughly into ten million Christians—half of them Roman Catholics—three million Buddhists, forty million Muslims, and three hundred and seventy-seven million Hindus. Why, then, did the World Council of Churches choose this nation's capital, New Delhi, as the site of its Third Assembly? For a number of good reasons. *First*, no major ecumenical gathering had ever been held in an Asian country, and if the "World" in the World Council is to mean anything its meetings must not always be centered in Europe or North America. *Second*, with the minority Christian position in India, a meeting of the World Council and representatives from its member churches in the midst of

so many non-Christian millions was designed to encourage and strengthen the Church's witness there. *Third*, a firsthand acquaintance with Asia, as found in India by the representatives of other churches from around the world, could not help but aid greatly the understanding and sympathetic support given to the Christians at work in a largely non-Christian country and help them recognize the importance of this work—a work done in obedience to Christ's command. *Fourth*, such a meeting in Asia also clearly indicated that "the World Council belongs to the East as well as the West; that it is at home in ancient cultures as well as new; that it is the agency of younger as well as older churches; that it is brown, black, yellow and white; that it chooses to be in the crossfire between the dynamic forces of revolution and order."

It was symbolically significant to hold the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi, for the Christian Churches belong "at the crossroads of history's traffic in the ideas and social forces that are moulding man's destiny today."

Christianity has been established in India since the first century when St. Thomas, so tradition tells, landed on the Malabar Coast in A.D. 52. It has made slow progress, with but small centers of Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican, and various other Christian bodies fighting valiantly to convert and educate the people, and to develop an indigenous ministry. The influence of the Christian religion in the country, however, is out of all proportion to the number of Christians there, but with so many millions of Hindus and Muslims, dotting the landscape with temples and mosques, idols, sacred cows and monkeys, and the life of the people caught up in the many tabus and mores of these religions, it has been and still is hard going for Christians.

Thus we went to India for the Third Assembly to uphold the hands of Christians there and to strike a loud-sounding note of challenge through the theme, which was heard throughout Asia and is being proclaimed the world over, "Jesus Christ, the Light of the World."

The "mission" of the Church is now, as always, in India and in every other land, that "God sends forth the Church to carry out His work to the end of the earth, to all nations and to the end of time."² Bishop Stephen Neill, who for years served as a missionary in India, put it dramatically. "The Lord Himself af-

²*Missions Under the Cross*, The Willingen Report, 1952, page 190.

firmed that His Word was a fire, which He had come to cast upon the earth. It is to be thought of as like a burst of shrapnel, with immense force at the point of impact, and violent projection forwards from that point. The Gospel was given an explosive force. It was the intention of its Founder that His Church should enter into conflict, never to be ended as long as time shall last, with every system of human thought and conduct that will not surrender to its power.”³

In the same book, the author, at one time a Tamil-speaking missionary in Tinevelly, tells why the Christian religion must be proclaimed to all the world in every age as the fulfillment of God’s word. “In the chapel of my old home in India there hangs a reproduction of Piero della Francesca’s fresco of the Resurrection. With his incomparable genius for giving eternity to a moment, the artist has fixed forever the profound sleep of the guards and the tranquil solemnity of the Risen Christ. On the left of the picture all is still winter; in the right the trees are already bursting into leaf. Because Christ is risen, we are between those two worlds. We look out on the dark billows of our world in tempest, on its desperate disappointments, its anxious calculations, its delusive hopes. We are already partakers of the new calm world of reconciliation and achievement. The Gospel we bring to the world is the Gospel of hope because it is the Gospel of the Resurrection. But that Gospel has power only because the Resurrection is the Resurrection of the Crucified.

“It is as the Crucified that Jesus draws the hearts of men to Himself . . . ‘Tell it out among the heathen that the Lord hath reigned from the tree.’”⁴ This is the strangest of all transformations. God has taken that place of honor and disaster and made it the place of peace. In our darkest hours of despair, it is to the Cross that we turn to find consolation. When we are tempted to doubt everything, it is the Cross that tells us plainly that God is love. Bowed down by the sense of failure, we turn to the Cross and receive the grace of forgiveness. When the way is not clear before us, and we hesitate about the vocation of a lifetime, it is the Crucified who says to us, ‘Follow me.’”⁵

The task of the Church is an unfinished task, and always will be until in God’s good time “Jesus Christ, the Light of the World,” has penetrated every dark corner of it.

³*The Unfinished Task*, page 19, Lutterworth Press, London, 1957.

⁴The rendering of Psalm 96:10 given in some manuscripts of the Septuagint.

⁵Neill, *op. cit.*, pp. 223-224.

For over two weeks these officially appointed representatives of the churches were together in discussion and prayer, taking seriously the business of the Assembly, which required long and hard work to complete. But there was much more to it than this. There was a sense of urgency and mission, which pervaded every section and committee, and which came through in the general sessions and was caught up and enunciated by the speakers in their prepared and extemporaneous addresses. The implications of the theme were paramount—Jesus Christ, the Light of the *World*. All of it! All things in it! I believe New Delhi gave evidence of an ecumenical church on the move, which showed by its utterances and well-considered actions that it exists not for itself but for the world, a world composed of parishes and denominations and people who would empty themselves and lose their lives in outgoing, humble service to man's most urgent and deepest needs, and who are determined to bear witness to that light and, from New Delhi on, to see that Christ's light is reflected in the decisive circles of man's affairs, so there will be in fact, "no darkness at all."

PART II



WHAT HAPPENED

The Christians who went to New Delhi *from everywhere*—from every continent and from every ethnic group—will take back what happened there *to everywhere*, a perfect example of the Church gathered, and the Church scattered. Only 1,500 people were there to represent all the churches in all categories but they were backed up and supported by the pledged prayers of millions of Christians everywhere.

It is easy enough to create a setting for such an Assembly, and to induce anticipation and arouse interest; perhaps too many expectations and hopes were aroused which cannot be realized just yet. But it is hard to bring unheard speeches and discussions alive for sharing with those who eagerly wait to know what was done in the public meetings, the general sessions, the section and committee meetings at New Delhi; what was said in the large and small talk of the participants in response; and what were the final agreed-on findings which represented the real fruit of the Assembly and which were expected to be taken seriously by the member churches and, where possible, implemented at all levels.

The Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches may not have been “a second reformation,” but it was certainly one of the most widely representative gatherings of Christians since the 16th century.¹

¹*Time* magazine in its cover story for December 3, 1961, labeled this “the Ecumenical Century.” Because of “the scandalous disunity among Christians that has alienated men and cheapened the church . . . the scattered forces of the Christian faith are realigning and regrouping. . . . Once proud and self-sufficient churches are being driven together by cold and whistling winds in a turbulent world.” As evidence, *Time* pointed to the Pan-Orthodox conference in Rhodes last fall, the coming Ecumenical Council of the Roman Catholic Church (which had observers at New Delhi), the National Council of Churches and the surge for unity in the U.S.A., and the Third Assembly.

We Worshiped

Arrangements for worship included daily morning worship and evening prayers, with a formal opening and closing service for the Assembly, an open communion service, opportunities for each tradition to celebrate its own liturgical rite² or Free Church form, and one Sunday morning left free for worship in local churches.

The several morning worship services followed a set form of the particular tradition of the leaders, but not until the second Monday morning did they come alive, when it was announced that General Superintendent Günter K. A. Jacob of the Evangelical Church in Germany, the scheduled leader of the service, had not been permitted to leave East Germany. In his place the service was led and his sermon was read by a fellow churchman. The entire service took on new meaning in the light of this announcement, from the opening sentence, "Let us . . . run with patience the race that is set before us," through the special prayers for our "Brother Jacob" and those who dwell in darkness—"in the darkness of prisons and refugee barracks and camps behind barbed wire," to the sermon—"We do not lose heart, we do not become despondent, we do not grow slack in our service, we do not give up in resignation."

Worship played an important part in the life of the Assembly, and sharpened its spiritual awareness as worship was followed by work.

The opening service was moving and memorable, and gave a soaring promise of things to come, centering on the primacy of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World. It was our first visit to the *shamiana*, where the public meetings were held. One local headline described this service as the "Men of God Muster Strong." The procession of 1,200 official participants, grouped by countries, moved from the Vigyan Bhavan, where all other meetings were held, to the *shamiana*, on a flawless Indian winter's day, with the temperature holding at a steady 70°. It was marked by the wide variation of tradition as outwardly and visibly expressed in ecclesiastical dress, from the elaborate Anglican and Orthodox attire

²There were opportunities to worship according to the newly revised Anglican Liturgy of the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma, and Ceylon; the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom of the Greek Orthodox Church; the Lutheran rite, as sponsored by the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India; the Liturgy of the Church of South India; and the Holy Qurbana of St. James of the Syrian Orthodox Church of the See of Antioch and India. All were also invited to share in a communion service, sponsored by the Church of South India and the United Church of Northern India, using the Church of South India Liturgy. (The CSI is a significant example of organic union of Anglican, Presbyterian, Congregational, and British Methodist traditions, inaugurated in 1947.)

to the simple everyday clothes of the Quakers. But the whole of the ecclesiastical spectrum was necessary to show the inclusive nature of the ecumenical movement in the wide sweep of church traditions assembled in the procession.

The service of praise, penitence, and thanksgiving was conducted by the presidents, and the sermon, delivered by Yale-trained Baptist U Ba Hmyin of Burma, picturesquely dressed in his native costume, was on the main theme. This Burmese leader said that every Christian is called to be a witness to Jesus Christ who is God's Light in the world, and stressed the need for a "relevant as well as a universal theology for the Christians of both East and West," for without such a theology "the Church will stand isolated from the powerful movements of the nascent faiths of Asia and the world. . . . No theology," he said, "will deserve to be called ecumenical . . . which ignores Asian structures—it will be parochial and Western only." This does not mean a disregard of the Christian heritage of the West, but taking it seriously in an Asian setting. "The synthesis of Oriental apprehensions of Christianity to the Occidental structure of thinking will result in a comprehensive universal theology wherein the people will hear the Gospel in their own tongues."

Significantly, from the beginning we were confronted with the Christian approach to non-Christian religions as one of the major challenges in the declaration that Jesus Christ is indeed the Light of the whole world.

On Saturday evening it was cold in the *shamiana*, but because of their earlier experience at the evening public meetings, those who came wore their coats and were comfortable throughout the United "Service of Preparation for the Holy Communion." This service seemed strangely appropriate, even under a brightly colored tent and in spite of the cacophony of Saturday night traffic sounds dominated by the squawking of horns and interspersed with a few night-bird cries. The service brought us all to a closer examination of our disunity as evidenced in the inability to kneel at the same altar or sit around the same holy table and eat of the One Bread and drink of the One Cup. Dr. Douglas Horton, Congregationalist chairman of the Commission on Faith and Order, stressed the main ray of hope in the situation—we "know that the separation [at the Lord's Table] is not good," therefore, we cannot rest until we *can* break bread together.

On the second Sunday morning, again in the *shamiana*, there was an open communion service, according to the newly revised

Anglican "Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper" of the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma, and Ceylon. All baptized members of their respective churches were invited to partake.

The service was conducted by the Bishop of Delhi, while the sermon was preached by the Right Reverend Lakdasa de Mel, Bishop of Kurunagala, Ceylon, the genial chairman of the press and broadcasting committee. The Metropolitan of Calcutta and the Archbishop of Canterbury were enthroned behind the improvised altar. With altar rails in the front and at the rear of the *shamiana*, the several thousand who received were administered to quickly. There were almost "five thousand fed," bringing dramatically to life the Gospel for the Day, John's story of the loaves and the fishes. With very few exceptions all who were present went to the altar rail and received.

We Studied the Bible

During the first week, and on the last two days, the daily sessions began with forty-five minutes of Bible study. Much was made of Bible study in preparation for this Assembly in the booklet "Jesus Christ, the Light of the World."

For Bible study the Assembly participants were divided into three groups. The leader opened each meeting with an introduction to the day's text, including one or two questions for guidance during the ten minutes of silence and private meditation. This was followed by delegates speaking at random as they were inspired. Some of the most pertinent needlelike points of meaning came forth, as miniature bits of revelation were given and shared spontaneously, quickly, and simply. The last few minutes of each session were turned over to the leader for gathering up and driving home the main points and for making the next assignment.

Of all the passages chosen 1 John 1:5 was the most significant for me and fitted almost every moment of the Assembly program. As the words "no darkness at all" were pondered throughout the Assembly the post-New Delhi implications became almost frightening. In God there is no darkness. We who are incorporated into the Christian fellowship are "in Christ" and he is in us. Therefore, there should be no darkness in us, since his light shines through us. This was both the vision and the burden carried away from New Delhi.

We Combined Forces

The big business came at the very first general session of the Assembly in the great decision which was made to integrate the World Council and the International Missionary Council. Ever since the formation of the former at Amsterdam in 1948, each council had worked "in association with" the other. Therefore, this "great decision" was also a natural development, an almost inevitable consequence of the ecumenical movement. Bishop Lesslie Newbigin, a mountain-climbing bishop of the Church of South India, who will be the director of the new Division of World Mission and Evangelism,³ expressed the belief that "the bringing of missions into closer integration with the work of the World Council will help to meet some of the spiritual conflicts of our time." The participation of thirty-eight national councils with one hundred and ninety-eight churches means "that missions will now be at the very heart of the day-to-day work of the churches through this new dimension of the World Council."

Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, the Dutchman who is General Secretary of the World Council, has been dubbed "The Chief Fisherman" of the ecumenical movement as embodied in the World Council of Churches, because his name means literally "fisher at the head." To this much-honored and decorated ecumenical pioneer and underground leader in World War II, integration meant widening the acceptance of the principle that all churches are called together to bring the gospel to millions "who do not know it as the word of life and hope." Willem, called "Wim" affectionately by his many friends, made it clear that "co-operation is not the same as unity, but it can and should be a mighty stimulant to unity." His text was Isaiah's words, "Enlarge the place of thy tent."⁴ This enlargement takes place through unity, witness, and service, with special emphasis on responsible growth and action in each of these areas. "We must enlarge our tent," he said, "because the longing for Christian unity has ceased to be" a pre-occupation of the few and has become a concern of the many. "The light which we receive from Him who is the Light of the world is not to be put under a bushel [basket], not even under the domes of Cathedrals or the roofs of parish churches; it is to shine among our fellowmen. . . . We are witnesses to the light that shines

³This new division will take over and continue the work formerly carried on by the International Missionary Council, including its relationships with National Christian Councils, its field work, studies, some of its publications, and its several sponsored agencies.

⁴Isaiah 54:2.

in the dark places, in the blind alleys in which men are caught and in the prisons in which they are imprisoned." Dr. Visser 't Hooft, multilingual theologian, whose chief hobby is Rembrandt, will continue to run the enlarged World Council with a strong, imaginative and steady hand.

A special act of thanksgiving followed the unanimous vote of the Assembly for integration and the declaration by the chairman, one of the World Council Presidents, Greek Archbishop Iakovos, "that these two councils are now united in one body with the name of the World Council of Churches."

We Enlarged Our Tent

The admission of twenty-three new churches into full membership in the World Council was the second item of big business and made a lively beginning to the second day of the Assembly, mainly because of the much publicized application of the Russian Orthodox Church. This largest group of churches ever to be admitted at one time included four Orthodox, two Pentecostal, five Presbyterian, two Lutheran, one Anglican, one Baptist, one Moravian, one United, four Evangelical, and two Congregational. These twenty-three additional member churches in the World Council brought the total up to 198, in 70 countries, "the largest single community of mutual sustaining fellowship" ever to be brought together.

The biggest enigma of all was, and is, the Russian Orthodox Church, which is suspect in some quarters.⁵ However, careful consideration had been given to their application by the Central Committee, and their acceptance as a member church was recommended because the Central Committee was satisfied that this large group of Christians (estimated at 50,000,000) behind the Iron Curtain fulfilled all the requirements for membership, including the basis—accepting Christ as both God and Savior. Since every member of the Communist Party must deny the very existence of God, it is impossible for any Christian to be a communist.

Later, in a press conference, Archbishop Nikodim, the bearded, thirty-two-year-old head of the Russian Orthodox delegation, said that "the church is completely independent from state inter-

⁵Pickets outside the Vigyan Bhavan during the voting carried placards which read, "Agents of Mr. K."

ference." The Russian Orthodox Church "has always witnessed to the Gospel throughout its history and it is witnessing now." In spite of "atheist propaganda in the Soviet Union, there is complete religious freedom and the state does not interfere in church affairs."⁶

Just as significant as the large block of orthodox members at the extreme Catholic end, were the two Pentecostal churches at the extreme Protestant end, thus making the World Council fellowship even more comprehensive.

Before the delegates from the newly elected member churches were seated officially, two Americans made addresses. Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, a Lutheran and long-time chairman of both the Central Committee and its Executive Committee, gave a brief résumé of the work of these two Committees following the Evanston Assembly in 1954. Since this report is found in print and its 288 pages can be read,⁷ Dr. Fry simply underscored every word of it and called it "a basic and indispensable document for the days that lie ahead of us." He spoke of the balance in the World Council operation between study and action, and how the Central Committee had done its best to carry out the will of the member churches as directed by the previous Assembly.

Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, stated clerk of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and chairman of the Finance Committee, gave an introduction to the extended report on Program and Finance as printed in the Assembly "Work Book." The delegates were urged to study this entire book with care since, if ac-

⁶The Russian Orthodox Church, in spite of unrelenting government opposition and at times intense pressure and persecution, has maintained Christian worship in its land. Persons who have seen their services are unanimous in agreeing that the churches are filled, in fact crowded, and that their liturgy and music are moving and of deep spiritual significance. . . .

The church in Russia lived under the heavy hand of the Czars and has since lived under the dominance of a Communist state dedicated to atheism. . . .

But on the issue of whether Russia is to be an atheist or a Christian nation there is a head-on collision between church and state. On this issue no Russian churchman has given any indication that he was prepared to give in or to compromise. On this issue, an historic struggle currently goes on within Russia. . . .

The Russian state maintains, and teaches in its schools, that science and religion cannot be reconciled and that science is true and that our Christian faith is based on fabrications and therefore false. . . . The Russian Church maintains and preaches that science and religion are compatible and that God has revealed himself to man through the Holy Scriptures and also through the ever expanding books of science.

The members of the World Council of Churches have welcomed into their fellowship the Russian Orthodox Church and they pray God's blessing on the heroic struggle of the Russian Orthodox Church to propagate the Gospel in their land and to restore their country to the status of a Christian state. (*A statement by Mr. Charles C. Parlin, American Methodist and a member of the World Council of Churches Presidium.*)

⁷*Evanston to New Delhi*, \$1.50 per copy. Order from the World Council of Churches, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, New York.

cepted, it would chart the course of the World Council for at least the next six years. He reminded the Assembly that if the recommendations of this report were voted the member churches would be expected to accept their share of the proposed increased budget. In an open hearing on this report there was general agreement and support of the expanded program, which was adopted unanimously by the Assembly.

Following these two reports the delegates of the newly elected member churches were seated amid a fanfare of picture-taking and applause.

We Elucidated the Light Theme

The first day of the Assembly ended with the keynote address on the main theme given by Bishop Gottfried Noth of the Evangelical Church in East Germany. Almost his very first word was that Jesus Christ is not the light of a race, a class, a culture or a period, but "He seeks out the darkness where it is to be found." To Bishop Noth the theme did not mean that Christians claim to have all the solutions for the world's problems nor are out to compete with the many other lights of the world, but that Christians "can rely only on one thing: when Christians face the distress of the world in the name of Christ and in his love, then he sends his light, and the spell of sin—which binds both the wise and the foolish—is broken."

This Christian leader from behind the Iron Curtain said Christ wants his light to shine through his disciples, and everything they do is to be done through the influence of his light. "Where this is rightly understood, there is no room for weary resignation; on the contrary, the Church is given power to undertake joyous action." Despite all the different ways in which its action may be interpreted, in spite of the fact that the world does not understand, "Christ will make the Church's life a powerful witness, so that his light shines into the world."

The substance of this address furnished solid meat for the sections to use in discussing and relating the theme to their own assigned subtheme of unity, witness, or service. The session ended with evening prayer conducted by the Rev. J. Russell Chandran, Principal of the United Theological College in Bangalore, and chairman of the Worship Committee of the Assembly.

A further word on the theme. "Light" is a term widely used and understood in India, especially in a religious sense,⁸ and through its easy translation into the many languages and dialects of that country, we believe a new dimension and content were given to the word as it was associated with Jesus Christ, whose Person is the heart and core of the Christian message. He *is* the Light of the world.

In trying to relate the implications of the theme to the ecumenical movement I came across a wonderful analogy in the recently conducted experiments with "Microwave Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation." For the first time light rays, which vibrate tens of millions times faster than ordinary radio waves, have been successfully controlled, directed, and modulated so that thousands of conversations can simultaneously be transmitted over a single beam of light. The secret is in taking light waves, which ordinarily move like an unruly mob, and transforming them into a beam of coherent light, making them move like disciplined soldiers. The big difference is between an unexcited atom, which absorbs light waves and ends their transmission, and an excited atom, which takes whatever light waves strike it at the same frequency, and is stimulated to pass them on, increasing in power and continuing on course in the direction of their propagation.

Does this not apply to the ecumenical movement? Note how the critical difference between unexcited and excited atoms applies to New Delhi and its success in making its light theme vital and relevant. We must pray constantly for the transformation of unruly, dead-end churches and Christians—unexcited atoms—into conductors of coherent light—excited but disciplined atoms—for ecumenical movement is beginning to surge everywhere, even behind the Iron Curtain and in the Vatican, and if "the second reformation" is really under way there may result from New Delhi "a new understanding of the relation between the Light of the world and the world's most disturbing perplexities."

⁸The god Shiva, for example, is conceived of as "light everywhere, so that one cannot say it is here or it is there." Buddhism declares that the teaching of Buddha is the light which drives out darkness. According to the Koran of Islam, Allah is the light of heaven and earth; through his revelation he guides men on the path to his light. The Bible goes much deeper than all this, for it asserts the unique place of Jesus Christ as God's light made manifest in and through a person. More than this, it asserts his power over the world, power to give light and life to men. However extraordinary the claim, Christ continues to make it, and as living Lord he still confronts men to show them the Father. God's light, in and through Christ, according to his claim, has the power to enable men to become sons of God. This power, which not only illumines the world around us but is able to penetrate and transform our inmost being, is a very particular and wonderful kind of light, different from any other light men have ever known. In him the very presence of the living and loving God is among men as the awe-inspiring, blinding, glorious God of light who cares for men wherever they are, whatever they do.

All who came to New Delhi were cautioned in the beginning to be fully aware of the daring action of proclaiming Jesus Christ as *the* Light of the world, which could prove offensive in a land dominated by non-Christian faiths, where Christians might appear to be "ordinary people making extraordinary claims." That claim must always be made with a combination of humility and boldness. The Assembly remained aware of this difficult role throughout and, from the reports in the press, left behind a good impression, with the Christian religion no longer a peculiar Western possession but belonging to the world, including India.

It was in the sections that the theme found its most intense and thorough expression in the non-Christian atmosphere of India, and where the delegates were reminded that Christians, to put it bluntly for home consumption, must find in him whom they declare to be *the* Light of the world "no darkness at all," and prove it by their lives.

We Took a Good Look at Unity, Witness and Service

Each related theme had its own background address during the first three days of the Assembly—"Called to Witness," by Dr. Paul D. Devanandan of India; "Called to Service," by Professor Masao Takenaka of Japan; and "Called to Unity," by Professor Joseph Sittler of the United States.

Dr. Devanandan, much-traveled director of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society in Bangalore, discussed the nature of Christian witness "to the reality of the New Creation in the Risen Christ," and declared this witness was "the one determining factor in world history which gives it significance and meaning, despite the confusion and disorder produced by man's endeavor to divert its destiny towards ends of his own devices." He went on to develop his thesis as expressed in "missionary preaching," which he said is "hope in action," and through local congregations, which are the pilgrim people representing "the community of the New Age in the context of world life in which it is placed, . . . living *with* their fellow men, and yet as different *from* them."

The Christian witness is always in the world, where "the gospel can be communicated in terms of the everyday concerns of ordinary commerce among people," by a truly indigenous church, fur-

nishing "witnesses who think and speak and behave like those whom they address, for only then the message of the gospel becomes intelligible and relevant to the common man." In such a world "Christian witness cannot rest content with vague generalities, but must address itself to the concrete realities of the contemporaneous situation."

This Indian scholar discussed Christian witness in a world of other faiths, and stressed the need for "the effective use made of the religious vocabulary," investing it with a new meaning, finding common expression through the cultural pattern of life, denuding religious concepts of "their original connotation and reclothing them with the new meaning inherent in the gospel." This does not mean, he said, an annihilation of other religions but rather that God will "gather together in one all things in Christ."⁹

In the brief discussion of this paper it was mostly Asians and Africans who spoke, adding their several amens, with special pleas for concern over the communication of the gospel more effectively in their own countries; and all of them spoke of the hope for something specific to take back from the Assembly to bring more light to their own people.

"Particular" Christians bear witness where they are, and present the drama of redemption in miniature continually. Each Christian is a peripatetic little theatre presenting dramatic skits at unscheduled curtain times. The daily extemporaneous drama of each life is composed of many scenes to be *lived out*, not *acted out*, involving and influencing other players in a random and unrehearsed cast, playing to a happenstance audience, making vivid and concrete God's mighty acts as they are incorporated into one's existence.

For the Christian the stage is always set, the curtain is always up; there are always watchers of the scene in progress on stage, and each Christian is responsible for what men see and hear, and what happens to them because of it. That is why such a theme as "light," with its many variations, must be presented again and again so that men may be given every chance to know all the implications of it. Through individual Christians the Assembly theme can become of supreme and immediate importance to all men, for both time and eternity are compressed into a moment of influence in what each one says and does and is, as the drama of salvation unfolds bit by bit in our words and actions here, there,

⁹Ephesians 1:10.

and anywhere. We are all called to bear personal testimony to our conviction and experience concerning Jesus Christ, from New Delhi to New Canaan, that "in him is no darkness at all," and to prove it by being witnesses in the peripatetic dramas we live out each and every day, by God's help.

The half-hour breaks between sessions, both morning and afternoon, were welcome opportunities to stretch, walk around, do odd jobs, talk with friends and get ready for the next session. While the tea, coffee, and cola drinks tasted unusual, they furnished the excuse for a pause which did indeed refresh.

The second related theme was presented by Dr. Takenaka, a young professor of Christian social ethics at Doshisha University in Kyoto. His paper was lively and both well illustrated and well documented, but was hard to summarize. One of his most vivid points was what he called the four D's of Christianity—"divided, dependent, derived, dated." He said, "I cannot conscientiously sell such Christianity to my dearest friends."

Professor Takenaka pressed for "the serving dimension of God's people," and the larger concept of Christian service, where the churches on the busy street corners "must open their eyes and ears to find out what Christ is doing in the midst of the changing world for the restoration of true humanity," as much concerned with the prevention of social ills as they are with their cure.

Once again the discussion was led by Asians and Africans, pointing up the desperate need for guidance in applying the ideals of Christian service to concrete situations, each in his own country. Dr. Takenaka's speech was one of the few given in the Assembly which drew applause in the middle of it. This came when he told of the four outstanding social workers in Japan named by the Japanese Government and said, "all of them without a single exception are Christians."

We are all members one of another and of the body of Christ, "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer."¹⁰ And that is what Christian service is all about, a concern for human need which implies a personal willingness to be involved in meeting it. Dr. Norman W. Pittenger tells the story of a parish priest in London who was greatly concerned with the improvement of the sewers in the slums. One day he was asked why he, a Chris-

¹⁰1 Corinthians 12:26.

tian minister, should have so much to say on this particular and apparently secular subject. He replied, "Because I believe in the Incarnation." That's just the point. Every assault upon human integrity, dignity, and honor is an attack on our Lord, who is a sharer of all human life.

Long before the World Council was officially formed in 1948, the churches began to co-operate in their common ministry to human need in Christ's name. Almost spontaneously they came together to work among prisoners of war and refugees from the terrors of concentration camps and gas chambers, to help care for the hungry and the homeless, and to aid the war-battered churches and peoples of Europe and Asia. In their response to the world's need the churches began to discover one another and to realize that they had to collaborate in order to exercise a wise stewardship of resources as they tackled certain urgent world tasks. In this area of service there is no quarrel among the churches as they continue to face the world's need. The churches are knit together by this vast ministry of service and aid in Christ's name.

The final paper on the related themes, "Called to Unity," by Dr. Sittler, professor of Systematic Theology at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, was a masterful presentation of theology in poetry form, and placed before the Assembly a delineation of the unity theme which was designed to become a "chain reaction" in the section. This Lutheran poet-theologian connected unity with the main theme when he said, "it is now excruciatingly clear that Christ cannot be a light that lighteth every man coming into the world if he is not also the light that falls upon the world into which every man comes." In this world, which is "a God-haunted house," where "atoms are disposable to the ultimate hurt, . . . the very atoms must be reclaimed for God and his will. . . . If, now we put together the threat to nature and a Christology whose scope is as endless as that threat is absolute, do we, perhaps, gain a fresh and urgent vision of the call of God to the unity of the Church, and some help towards its definition and obedience?"

He concluded his original and challenging address by declaring the Church is both thrust and lured toward unity. The thrust is from behind and within; it is grounded in God's will and promise. The lure is God's same will and power operating upon the Church from the needs of history within which she lives her life. . . . The Church has found a melancholy number of ways to express her variety. She has found fewer ways to express her unity. But if we are indeed called to unity,

and if we can obey that call in terms of contemporary christology expanded to the dimensions of the New Testament vision (as found in Colossians and Ephesians especially), we shall perhaps, obey into fuller unity. . . . This radio-active earth, so fecund and so fragile, is his creation, and the material place where we meet the brother in Christ's light. Ever since Hiroshima the very term light has ghastly meanings. But ever since creation it has had meanings glorious; and ever since Bethlehem meanings concrete and beckoning.

In contrast with the two previous discussions on witness and service, with Asians and Africans taking the lead, it was the representatives of the older churches who responded more fully to unity. All comments, both favorable and unfavorable, were recorded and passed on to the section on unity for its guidance in producing an acceptable report, as they were from the previous discussions for the other two sections.

There are many members, but one body. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."¹¹ But within denominational families and between traditions, there are deep and serious divisions, which no medicine yet found, prescribed and taken, seems to heal. But if we accept Christ as God and Savior, then we must accept all who accept him as one with us.

The vast and complicated problems of church unity involve both theological and nontheological factors intimately interrelated. Divisions may have resulted from social and economic causes, as well as emotional and theological ones; or divisions may be maintained because of ignorance or sheer human perversity and stubbornness. But Christ is not divided and in him is no prejudice nor uncharitableness nor exclusiveness.

It is in each local congregation and community that differences must at last be reconciled, and the churches must begin bearing a corporate witness to their oneness in Jesus Christ who is the Light of the whole world and each fraction of it.

Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, made manifest in unity, witness, and service. This is the continuing task of the churches which the Third Assembly underscored at every opportunity.

We Listened to World Council Concerns

After the solid massing of main addresses during the first few days, the Assembly settled down to a variety of general and busi-

¹¹ 1 Corinthians 12:27.

ness sessions sandwiched in between the section and committee meetings, getting some of the concerns of the World Council before the Assembly—the Laity, International Affairs, Faith and Order, Interchurch Aid and Service to Refugees, Social Change, and the Bible.

There was a panel of three speakers for “The Laity: The Church in the World”—an Indian lawyer, a principal of an English College, and the director of a German broadcasting company. Each one, as a Christian layman, bore witness to the role of the laity in the world, speaking from three quite different situations: from the world of law and nation-building in India, the industrial world in Great Britain, and the world of a divided Germany; and how as members of the laity they in their work tried to *be* the laity, God’s people in the world.

In his closing remarks, the chairman of the panel, Dr. Klaus von Bismark, descendant of the famous German statesman, pleaded for the clergy to be their partners “so that *together* we can play the symphony of redemption.”

A prominent place has always been given to the historic role of Faith and Order in the life of the ecumenical movement, as it continues to engage the churches in fundamental theological study and to further conversations between the churches leading to deeper levels of unity. An Anglican Archbishop theologian, a Greek Orthodox lay theologian, and a West Indian advocate for youth made a well-balanced presentation.

The 100th Archbishop of Canterbury, after an explosive flurry of picture-taking, moved smoothly into a brief, tightly packed exposition of the 17th Chapter of St. John’s Gospel, our Lord’s great prayer for unity. This distinguished scholar-prelate said, “It is when we get back to the depth and comprehensiveness of our Lord’s prayer that we see the depth and comprehensiveness of our quest for unity.”

“Is not the need,” Dr. Ramsey asked, “for West and East to discover together those gifts of God which authentically belong not to any one age or phase or culture or continent, but to the one holy, catholic, apostolic Church of Christ, and to receive them not indeed as a return to any past age but as the media of Christ’s dynamic power for the present and the future?” In the fulfillment of our Lord’s prayer for unity, truth, and holiness, the theologian’s task is but a tiny fragment, for “all the while Christ the head of

the Church goes on in his mercy using the Church, divided though it is, to make known his truth and unity."

The Orthodox position was presented by a young professor, Dr. Nikos A. Nissiotis, who did his best in a rather heavy but well-reasoned paper, to make clear the witness and the service of Eastern Orthodoxy to the one Undivided Church. This lay member of the Church of Greece is Assistant Director of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey.

Later in the Assembly the Orthodox announced a major break with their practice at past ecumenical meetings of issuing separate statements on the subject of unity. Archbishop Iakovos, the head of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, said "the time has come for Orthodox to make their contributions in drafting reports and not through issuing statements either of opposition or clarification of their theological and ecclesiological position on the matters of unity, witness, and service unless it becomes an absolute necessity." This was a significant and historic decision, especially in the light of the four new Orthodox member churches, and opened up a new era in ecumenical conversation—Orthodox-Protestant dialogue instead of Orthodox monologue.

After the rather tough going of listening to two highly theological addresses, heavily loaded on the catholic side, it was refreshing to hear the Rev. Philip A. Potter, until recently head of the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches. This tall forthright Jamaican reminded us that our pledge at Amsterdam "to stay together," and at Evanston "to grow together," must become at New Delhi "to go forth together . . . to manifest the unity we have already received and will receive from Christ the Light of the world."

On the second Sunday evening the story of Interchurch Aid and Service to Refugees was presented with considerable dramatic impact on the stage of the Vigyan Bhavan. "God is Our Refuge and Strength," a "drama experiment," featured a combination of films, which had been specially photographed or taken from newsreels, and recorded commentaries spoken by Sir Michael Redgrave and Dame Flora Robson. At four different points in the program Max Robertson, well-known BBC commentator, discussed with churchmen from Japan, Hong Kong, South Africa, Calcutta, New Zealand, and Indonesia, the times of national disasters during which the World Council had commissioned them to give immediate help to the homeless, the starving, and the uprooted.

A dramatic intervention came halfway through the program when the Archbishop of East Africa walked onto the stage to bring news of what he had seen during the previous few weeks of the sufferings of victims of drought and flood in Kenya and the relief operation undertaken by the Christian Council of Kenya in conjunction with the government, assisted by a \$28,000 gift from the Division of Interchurch Aid and Service to Refugees. "We are most grateful," he said.

This word and picture report of what the churches do together in times of trouble without distinction of color, creed, caste, or race, pointing to the basis of the faith which impels them to act in this way, was a distinct success as a witness to the churches' "conscience in action."

"The Churches and the Challenge of Social Change" came before the Assembly on the second Tuesday evening.

The first address was given by a distinguished sociologist from the Netherlands, Prof. Egbert de Vries, who asserted that it has become "utterly impossible" for the Christian Church to stay aloof from the social changes of the 20th century. "Any church which is static or purely introspective is committing suicide in a dynamic self-directed society." One cannot keep society out of the home or the church by closing the door.

Dynamic society walks in, though the doors be shut. . . . The whole world is not only at the doorstep of every church in a metropolitan slum area, it knocks also at the door of the quiet . . . village churches in Europe or in the rural areas of North America. It does so by changing the social environment in which church members live. It does so by changing their aspirations, their attitude, their behavior. . . . There is no escape for any church, whatever its structure, from thinking, praying, and acting in global terms [which means that] the ecumenical movement in a dynamic age [of rapid social change] is a God-given tool for the renewal of church life all around the world, to the extent in which churches and Christians are willing.

The second address of the evening was given by Mr. M. M. Thomas, associate director of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society in Bangalore, on "The Challenge to the . . . Churches in the New Nations in Africa and Asia." This distinguished layman of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, said the Christian concern for politics in these new nations is the area "most neglected by the churches . . . and the most urgently needed [tool] for the fulfillment of their social mission."

He insisted that "the exercise of citizenship in politics is a Christian imperative."

Mr. Thomas concluded that "within the context of Christian partnership with non-Christians in building the nation, and as integral to it, there will naturally develop a real dialogue on the nature and destiny of man among the adherents of Christianity, non-Christian religions, and secular faiths, and this "will give to our confession of Christ as Lord and Savior a challenging relevance not known before."

The final presentation of World Council concerns was on "The Bible and the Churches' Task." The first speaker was the newly appointed, scholarly Archbishop of York, President of the United Bible Societies. He illustrated his remarks with a large chart showing some startling facts, contrasting the growth of the world's population with the lack of corresponding growth in Christianity, which he blamed in part on copies of Holy Scripture not being available in sufficient quantities for distribution in the many languages of mankind.

While it is a remarkable accomplishment, he said, to have translated the Scriptures into 1,165 different languages, in many of these languages "only *parts* of the Bible have been translated" and there are still over a thousand languages into which *any part* of the Bible has yet to be translated.

The Bible, he said, is the church's cutting edge and must not be blunted or limited by language barriers or financial lack.

Before the second address of the evening, the president of the National Christian Council of India, Dr. David G. Moses, one of the newly elected presidents of the World Council, presented in the name of all the member churches in India, a beautifully wrought brass ash tray to each delegate, which was produced locally and decorated with the *Oikoumene* symbol.

The task of the former BBC Baptist theologian, the Rev. Edwin H. Robertson, study secretary of the United Bible Societies, was not so much to emphasize the distribution of the Bible, important and urgent as this is, but rather to stress the *use* of the Bible, *how* it is read. The ubiquitous Dr. Robertson had just finished a five-year worldwide survey of this vital question, during which he discovered a meager, limited use of the Bible in many areas, but also he discovered "evidence of a renewed confidence in the Bible" in other areas, which indicates the Bible is being "used as effectively in those places in time of peace and prosperity as it can be in time

of crisis." Dr. Robertson urged that more attention be given by the churches to the question, "*How* shall they read?"

The last address of the evening was given by the young general secretary of the Bible Society of India and Ceylon, Dr. A. E. Inbanathan, who spoke of the new study launched jointly by the World Council and the United Bible Societies to determine specific ways in which the biblical message is being set forth in evangelism. Just as the Archbishop of York spoke of the early Church as a church "with a book in its hand" so this young Church of South India leader spoke of the "cutting edge" of that book "in a world of racial and international tensions and threats of nuclear warfare," and how needful it was "to let the Word speak, and speak for itself to man in his puzzlement and confusion, of forgiveness, community, and peace," for "where the Bible is, there evangelism is."

One of the favorite hymns at ecumenical gatherings was used appropriately enough just before Dr. Inbanathan spoke, "Thine is the glory." This hymn was first used enthusiastically and frequently at Amsterdam and has been used ever since as one of the most referred to hymns in the *Cantate Domino*, the official hymnal of the World Council.

We Welcomed the Young People

The future leaders of the ecumenical movement are found among the youth participants at ecumenical gatherings. Scotland's John M. Baillie and England's William Temple were first stirred to a life commitment to ecumenicity by their experience as pages at the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, 1910. One hundred and sixty young people came to New Delhi early for a full week of serious discussion to prepare for the fullest possible understanding of the Assembly in their several roles as youth participants, stewards, and aides. There were orientation addresses on the life and work of the World Council over the past seven years, with special reference to the task of "this generation," and the young people were given a picture of the church in Asia today, its present situation, and future challenges.

They considered the Assembly theme and the related themes in a kind of "laboratory experiment" of what to expect. Daily Bible study centered on the biblical texts illuminating the theme. Morning and evening worship was conducted by the conference chaplains, and their general sessions were devoted to the concerns of

the youth department and the contributions the youth participants could make to the Assembly. They were probably the best prepared of all who came to the Assembly, possessed of both eagerness and enthusiasm to implement a vision. These young people were called by Dr. Visser 't Hooft to "work, pray, and sweat" for the cause of Christian unity at all levels. But they soon discovered that above all they were called also to patience and understanding, as they were confronted with the slowness of their elders and their churches.

The Rev. Roderick S. French, an American, secretary of the Youth Department of the World Council, said the work of his department consisted of relating "the entire program of the World Council to the youth constituency" and making "certain that the youth of the churches are actively involved in the whole range of the Council's activities and that the thinking of young people on current ecumenical issues is effectively articulated."

Rod French said the goal of youth work was to "help young people understand themselves as being the body of Christ set in this world to love and serve," which means primarily education, especially "ecumenical education." The latter is "the communication of information" about the history of earlier ecumenical conferences and personalities and the work of the World Council, but it is also something more fundamental, namely "working out the implications of our common conviction that God has called into existence through his Son one people to manifest in witness and service his reconciling love for the world," which "touches and challenges everything from our theologies of baptism . . . to our education for social-political responsibility."

Later in the Assembly, Philip A. Potter said, "We are in serious danger of driving young people to despair of the churches and therefore in flight from them" and the work of the church "may perish for lack of younger men and women to take it up, because they despair of anything really happening [in it]."

This was certainly evident in one area, the issue of intercommunion, long a problem for the young people at their ecumenical conferences, as at Lausanne in the summer of 1960, when they issued a statement deploring the fact they were unable to gather at the Lord's Table together, and called upon the churches to work toward intercommunion at ecumenical gatherings. They forwarded a plea to the Assembly urging a serious consideration of the subject, stating, "we believe that the issue of intercommunion cannot

be isolated from the life of worship, witness, and service of the church," and "to share in these aspects of ecumenical life without being able to meet at the Lord's table raises the question of inter-communion between local churches and on an ecumenical level." Even though their plea that "one baptism must lead us to one table" was discussed by the Committee on Faith and Order, nothing definite came before the Assembly.¹²

The findings and recommendations from other sections of the Pre-Assembly Youth Conference were forwarded to the Assembly and considered by the various sections and committees and, in several instances, incorporated in their final reports.

While the 100 youth participants were sharing fully in the Assembly program, their behind-the-scenes counterparts were engaged in a totally different program of work. For example, while the delegates and advisers were kept out of the main hall between sessions, the mass of documents to be considered were piled neatly on their desks. This remarkable performance of providing all these documents deserved the following headline in a local paper, "Volunteer Army keeps Church 'Summit' Moving." This caption was followed by a story of the eighty young people—sixty stewards and twenty aides—from India, the United States, Europe, and Australia, who paid their own way in order to attend the Assembly. They were "maids-of-all-work" and their twelve-hour day was compensated for by board and lodging in a dormitory in one of New Delhi's less-than-first-class hotels. (The youth participants were housed in tents inside the Baptist compound about ten miles from the Vigyan Bhavan, where life was "fun" even if they pos-

¹²Principles were laid down at the Third World Conference on Faith and Order in Lund, Sweden, 1952, relating to the celebration of the sacrament at ecumenical gatherings which were reaffirmed at a consultation in Geneva, March, 1961, where it was agreed that "we have to find that arrangement of communion services which, while respecting the discipline of the churches and individual consciences, gives the fullest possible expression to the essential oneness of the Church of Christ which at such gatherings we confess together." The Unity Section expressed the belief "that the reordering of the Lund principles, together with the new steps recommended in the March consultation, represent a significant move toward giving the holy communion service its proper place in ecumenical work and witness."

Some of the reasons why it is so difficult to reach an agreement on a working basis for intercommunion are given by the Rt. Rev. Angus Dun, which should help to understand in part this continuing dilemma.

"The sharing in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper or the Sacrament of Holy Communion is not to be treated as a thing apart from the whole subject of unity. It has little power or meaning save as it is the sacramental accompaniment of a shared faith and a responsible, committed life in community. Rigorous conditions of admission to communion may be the expression of a proud and over-exclusive pretension, but they may also reflect the conviction that this is a responsible relationship. One cannot simply walk in on it without commitment to the life of which this is a most holy expression. For two divided churches to declare that they are 'in communion' with one another, and then to go their own ways without taking counsel, without sharing burdens, without binding responsibilities, without any heavy commitment, is, to say the least, a not very costing form of unity." (*Prospecting for a United Church*, pages 26-27.)

sessed few modern conveniences and comforts.) They did cheerfully whatever task they were asked to do, and some of these tasks were worth mentioning: collating, stapling, and distributing of 15,000 sheets of mimeographed documents each day as they came from the cyclo-styling machines in English, French, and German; marshalling and stage-managing the procession at the opening service; helping with registration, information, and photo-sales; staying on duty at every session in the conference hall and the commission and committee rooms.

The youth at New Delhi came from Asia, Europe, North America, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America, all with the official approval of their churches; and they will continue to plead their viewpoint, year after year, until something happens, even though they grow old in the process, and perhaps lose some of their sense of urgency. But God does not grow old or forget and his will eventually gets done.

We Tackled Routine Business

It was inevitable that before very long the Assembly had to get down to much routine business. For example, on Thursday, the Rt. Rev. Henry K. Sherrill, chairman of the International Committee for the New Headquarters Building, gave his report. This long-needed, enlarged, and adequate new World Council headquarters, with library and conference room space and a chapel, will be located in Geneva on a much larger ground area than at the present address, 17 Route de Malagnou. The new location will be on the outskirts of the so-called "international area," convenient to bus service, the airport, and the railway station. The original estimated cost of \$2,500,000 was now increased to \$2,700,000, due to increases in labor and materials. Of this needed amount \$2,329,000 was in hand or assured. Since one wing of the building will not be finished until the balance is also in hand or well assured, Bishop Sherrill pled with the Assembly to finish the job. While this spacious and comfortable new and modern building will be more efficient and nearer other important and related areas of international work, the rambling old chalet and barracks on Malagnou will be missed by those to whom these buildings have symbolized the World Council for so long.

Later, Bishop Sherrill reported to the Assembly additional gifts of money and materials (marble from Greece, for example, and furnishings from Russia) totaling \$200,000, leaving a balance of

\$200,000 still to be raised. After the Assembly, the Central Committee authorized letting a contract for the third wing based on these expectations.

On the second Thursday afternoon, at the first of a long series of business and deliberative sessions, the six new presidents were elected, and one honorary president. For the first time, two laymen were among those elected, along with an Anglican archbishop, an Orthodox archbishop, a German church president, and a recently ordained Indian educator. Those elected to serve until the Fourth Assembly, some six years hence, were: Mr. Charles C. Parlin, an international lawyer and prominent member of the Methodist Church in the United States; Sir Francis Ibiom, governor of the Eastern Province of Nigeria and a leader in the Presbyterian Church there; Dr. Arthur Michael Ramsey, Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of All England; Archbishop Iakovos of the Greek Archdiocese of North and South America; Dr. Martin Niemöller, famous anti-Nazi leader, president of the Evangelical Church of Hesse-Nassau in Germany; Dr. David G. Moses, principal of Hislop College of Nagpur, India, who was ordained just before the Assembly by the United Church of Northern India and Pakistan. Dr. Joseph H. Oldham, 85-year-old British layman and ecumenical pioneer, was elected an honorary president. Dr. Oldham was the first secretary of the International Missionary Council, and played an important part in all pre-World Council ecumenical gatherings.

The presidents are ex-officio members of the 100-member Central Committee, which was also elected to serve until the next Assembly. Since there are now 198 member churches it was difficult to select a fair and adequate representation geographically, confessionally, and denominationally. Only thirty-two of those elected served on the previous Central Committee. The new Central Committee organized immediately and held a two-day meeting following the close of the Assembly. The work of the World Council between Assemblies is carried out by the staff under the direction and supervision of the Central Committee, which meets once a year, and its smaller Executive Committee, which meets twice a year.

The Report of the Credentials Committee was heard the same afternoon, giving a list of those officially present at the Assembly: 577 delegates, 105 advisers, 45 observers, 59 fraternal delegates, 120 guests, and 100 youth participants. Unfortunately, ten of the delegates, advisers, guests, and youth participants from East Ger-

many were not permitted by their government to leave the country. The Assembly was asked to remember them especially in their prayers.

The election of the new 120-member Commission on Faith and Order was completed on Friday afternoon. Those elected will serve until the next Assembly, but will meet only once in three years. A smaller working committee of its membership will meet annually. Plans are already under way for the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order to be held in the summer of 1963, probably in Montreal, Canada.

In the second Monday afternoon session, the Assembly voted to send "A Message to Christians in South Africa." Dr. Fry, in presenting the message, recalled the consultation at Cottesloe, a university town near Johannesburg, where a year ago the member churches of the World Council in South Africa gathered to discuss the churches' position with reference to the government's apartheid policies. In the statement which resulted were specific plans to enable them "to continue in this fellowship" and "to join in common witness" in their country. Three of the member churches disapproved of the statement their delegates had signed, and for this and other reasons withdrew from the World Council. The "message" reminded those Christians in South Africa who are bearing witness in the midst of such darkness, of our oneness in Christ, gave them an assurance of our prayers, and stated our dominant conviction that Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, and that a new intensity of this Light must shine in South Africa to penetrate the deep darkness there. The sending of the "message" was commended by a delegate from one of the South African churches.

On the last day, with some sense of the pressure of time, the Assembly finished its business and adjourned to meet some six years hence in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in Melbourne, Australia, or in some other place to be finally decided by the Central Committee. Several resolutions were dealt with, especially "An Appeal to All Governments and People," which had been referred back to the committee. In its revised and slightly emended form the resolution was adopted. It still did not suit some of the delegates and a substitute version, offered and debated at length, was voted down. The appeal called on "governments and people of every nation" to pursue peace with "boldness and courage" by every means

possible, "to build peace with justice" and attack "barriers of mutual distrust" at every level.

A resolution condemning the Portuguese government for the wanton destruction of human life in Angola, which had passed a few days before by only two votes, after the liveliest debate of the Assembly, was brought before the Assembly again and it was voted to send both the resolution and the record of the debate and the vote to the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs¹³ for "further consideration and urgent action," and to the Division of Interchurch Aid and Service to Refugees for whatever can be done in "the work of relief and rehabilitation." The reference was voted with the knowledge that the CCIA had already spoken in detail about the Angolan situation in a statement issued in June 1961.

Toward the end of the Assembly the gathering up process began, with every session given over to a deliberation on the reports from sections and committees, with an occasional bit of business interrupting the flow, seeking for a final formulation of the findings and policies of the Assembly for guiding the World Council and the member churches in the post-New Delhi period, and tying up all the loose ends of business before adjournment.

All reports with their recommendations were received and either forwarded to the Central Committee for carrying out, or commended to the member churches for their serious consideration, study, and actions appropriate in their several countries and situations, with the exception of a few resolutions and the Message which were adopted outright by the Assembly. In the end it is each member church which must assume responsibility for carrying out these recommendations of the Assembly.

The final order of business was a summary of the Third Assembly and its work, with well-deserved thanks given to all those who made the Assembly possible, especially to those Dr. Fry called "the underground." There were 297 members of the Assembly staff, with only 110 of them regular members, the rest having been coopted for the period of the Assembly. Some of the figures Dr. Fry gave were startling. For example, it was estimated that 34,000,000 people saw the procession at the opening service

¹³This commission, jointly appointed and supported by the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council, acts for both in the field of international relations.

on TV in the United States alone; also, 250,000 words were sent out from New Delhi by the wire services and individual newspapers; and six and a half tons of mimeograph paper were used for the Assembly documents—white for English, blue for German, pink for French. Some 350 accredited press and broadcasting representatives from all over the world were on hand. At the close of his thirty-minute “wrap-up” Dr. Fry introduced the new presidents, after graciously paying respects to the members of the outgoing Presidium, and all present stood and sang the Doxology before the benediction and official adjournment.

We Shared a Few Speakers

The public meetings were held in the *shamiana* in the evenings, but it was mostly the official participants who came. The anticipated crowds did not show up to fill the large tent, after the opening service.

On Thursday evening two timely addresses brought home to the Assembly, with power and significance, the kind of world the churches must witness in and to: “Africa,” by a Nigerian, and “International Affairs,” by the Dean of a Lutheran Theological Seminary in America. Both addresses communicated a sense of urgency in dealing with the “madness” of the world, especially in race relations and nuclear testing.

Sir Francis Ibiam, the spicy governor of Eastern Nigeria, was delayed and arrived on the scene only after his wife had read his paper. In a press conference later he continued to blast, as he had done in his paper, Christian missionary societies, accusing them of “creating obstacles to the unity of African churches” and not giving proper treatment and attention to the “black” Christians of Africa. His Excellency also continued his attack on the apartheid policies in South Africa, and lumped together the “odds and obstacles which hurt and make difficulties for the Africans” as stemming from the concept of “the superior and all-powerful white man.”

In his address Sir Ibiam had called for “the removal of all stumbling blocks to the cure of discriminatory practices everywhere” in which the Church could play a significant part. “Those who engineer and encourage discrimination against the African only because of the dark color of his skin are trying to be cleverer than God.” The discussions of the Central Committee should be

enlivened considerably by such statements from this prominent African layman who is chairman of the All-Africa Church Conference.

The singing of a hymn between the addresses helped to restore the circulation and gave a brief respite from the hard seats. Unfortunately many who could not take the cold any longer left at this point. I turned up my coat collar, crossed my arms and legs, leaned heavily against my neighbor, and stayed.

We were rewarded by a great address by Dr. O. Frederick Nolde, who shocked us all to attention with these opening words, "We totter from day to day on the brink of self-destruction." From this moment on he had our undivided attention for his address on "The Future Is Now." He enumerated the instances since Evanston when the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) spoke "to the nations" at the exact moment when decisions were being made.

By such "representations" the CCIA hoped, for example, in the exceedingly delicate area of nuclear weapons testing, that "world conscience may be stirred and world public opinion consolidated in order that, instead of a general resumption of tests, there may be a resumption of negotiations designed with all sincerity to bring about a reliable agreement to cease tests." This statement won a round of vigorous applause.

This American Lutheran invited attention "to a number of deeper forces which need to be set in motion" if today's complex and at times terrifying problems are to be resolved: "a common standard of international behavior"; "defining more sharply opportunities for peaceful competition and for peaceful co-operation as a means of living together in a divided world"; and "social justice for all men everywhere." In each of these areas the CCIA is already at work pinning down specific issues.

Everyone left this public meeting of the Assembly with cold feet, but with warm hearts and churning minds. After hearing these addresses the audience was in a sober mood, eager to help fight the battle of discrimination in their own countries more determinedly, and with a firmer grip on hope, feeling that so long as the churches have a common voice and use it, all is not lost.

Warmer weather prevailed on the second Thursday evening in the breezy *shamiana* and we were able to give our full attention to the panel discussion on "Why We Must Speak," a subject which

was devoted to mission and evangelism, led by Dr. D. T. Niles from Ceylon, a Methodist and a persuasive evangelist.

Dr. Niles introduced the panel theme by declaring, "The Christian faith is of such a nature that it demands proclamation. . . . The Christian must speak to prove that, only as men accept the dangers which lie on the road of Christ's discipleship, is there hope for all mankind. . . . Christianity is, in its essence, an event to be declared. Something has happened, something has been done, which is of decisive significance for each man and for all men, for each generation and for all time."

The panel leader said that, in our day, we must speak, and set ourselves to the task of bringing Christ's witness to bear "on the problems created by man's knowledge of atomic power, on the hopes awakened by men's desire everywhere to be politically free, on the realization . . . that this is one world and can be made safe for man, in peace, in justice, and in plenty, only as one world." Dr. Niles then introduced his panel of six witnesses as examples of those who "speak" out as Christians.

This Asian leader concluded the panel presentation by declaring, "We must speak," as these witnesses have testified, but "somehow the world to which our witness is addressed, the powers before whom our evidence is given, the men to whom we speak in the name of Jesus, must be helped to sense the faith and the commitment which lie behind and beneath all this speaking, and for this grace we must all pray without fail and without ceasing."

We Settled Down to Long Discussions

The Assembly was divided into three sections. Each section had its assigned subtheme of Unity, Witness, or Service. They were organized with two cochairmen, two secretaries, and a drafting committee. They did their best to carry out their instructions to produce a brief summary of findings for incorporation in the Assembly document along with other reports. All sections had difficulty in getting so large a group, some 250 to 300 in each section, to feel sufficiently at home with each other and their subject matter to move efficiently and with purpose toward the goal of producing a document based on the "Annotated Agendas" and the material in the preparatory booklet. The sections finally warmed to their task, broke up into subsections, and spent their eight sessions of two hours each pulling together what they considered to be the most urgent and important aspects of their sub-

ject to bring before the Assembly and to be relayed to the churches for their inspiration, guidance, study, and action. In these section reports is recorded the solid gains made at New Delhi, and the first real glimmers of that second reformation.¹⁴

Discussion was difficult in the large section meetings, for there was no opportunity of give and take in dialogue form. This was remedied somewhat when the sections broke up into subsections, which were more manageable. The actual work of the sections will be considered later, but first it should be interesting to trace the procedure followed for reaching this common mind, expressed in a very brief document of not over 8,000 words, which cannot possibly convey to the reader the birth pains suffered in bringing it forth.

For example, in subsection A, of my Section on "Witness," we were assigned the material in the "Annotated Agendas" under "Possibilities for Communication." We had five full meetings together to get the job done. Here is roughly what happened.

During the first session together we gave scattered and random opinions all over the lot. In the second session our chairman asked us to sharpen our comments and direct them toward specific questions under our assigned subject. In our third session, we were given an interim report of the drafting committee, outlining our agreements under six points. Our time was spent in testing words and phrases, cleaning up certain areas of disagreement, then going on to new territory covering the remainder of our assignment. We moved toward a synthesis by bits and pieces and left it all with the drafting committee to make it coherent. In our last session we listened to a reading of the proposed draft report which would be incorporated in the larger report of the section. Again we had six points which we dealt with, one by one, until everyone was more or less satisfied, after laying a considerable burden of revision and addition on the hard-working, all-important drafting committee. We had one more chance to see our handiwork as we heard what parts of it got into the final report of the section.

But the "fun" had only begun. When we listened to the first composite draft of the three subsections, there was a violent reaction, and the work of the poor section drafting committee was torn to shreds, with comments like these: "Too long . . . unintelligible . . . no sense of urgency . . . too theological . . . does not reflect discussion in subsections . . . too pleasant . . . not sharp

¹⁴From now on, keep a pencil handy in order to circle those spots to come back to if you are in a study group.

enough . . . confusing phrases . . . not relevant . . . not challenging . . ." and so on. It was, of course, impossible to please all and to represent every shade of opinion, but the committee did its best to reach a final draft which most of the members of the section could support, and this version came to the Assembly.

It was slow work seeking and finding an ecumenical consensus, having to leave out large portions of the material assigned for our consideration. But the amazing thing to me was that so much was accomplished in so short a time by such an inexperienced group, and that such order came out of such chaos.

In spite of hard work there were some diversions for the delegates. Many of the embassies invited members of the Assembly to various functions. For the Americans the tea and reception given by Ambassador and Mrs. Galbraith was a pleasant affair and gave those from the United States a chance to meet and talk, some of them for the first time, because of the separation into sections and the scattered housing arrangements.

The affair was held in the Ambassador's residence and in the large but simple garden, with a two-piece orchestra playing familiar music. Many of us went to the American Embassy itself first only to discover the Ambassador lived three miles away. But the beautiful new Embassy building, designed by Edward Stone, was worth a trip to see. The unusual grill-like exterior was an adaptation of the Indo-Islamic screen treatment inside the Red Fort in the finely decorated white marble pavilion facing the Yamuna River.

Such social occasions helped the delegates relax and return to the grind of business refreshed.

We Sorted Out Our Findings

All the reports were presented for the first time on the second Friday, with a brief introduction by one of the chairmen of each section, followed by an opportunity for full discussion in the Assembly. It is impossible to record the process of reaction and revision. Each one's point of view, however, was heard and noted by the respective drafting committee chairmen for possible incorporation in their final drafts for presentation to the Assembly on the last Monday evening. Just as in the subsections and sections, there was a wide divergence of views, and the miracle of it all was

that any kind of draft was reached which would pass the scrutiny of the Assembly.

The last act in the tortuous and often tedious section process of reaching agreed on findings for forwarding to the churches, was the Assembly action in a Deliberative Session of accepting the revised reports as presented, making only minor revisions. On the whole, the section reports were at last acceptable, and the excerpts which follow were in the report which was approved in substance, received by the Assembly and commended to the member churches for study and appropriate action.

The final versions will all be published in complete form separately and soon, along with the Message, but for our use only the main points of the reports need to be covered in the logical order of unity, witness, and service, as places to begin the responsibility laid upon the member churches "for study and appropriate action."

UNITY

Bishop Oliver Tomkins of Bristol, Chairman of the Faith and Order Working Committee, in presenting the reports of the Unity Section, noted its two main points—"The Church's Unity" and "Some Implications to Consider." The first part was mainly a commentary on what is called the St. Andrew's statement on Unity, while the second part consisted of "the deepest, widest, simplest picture we can give of our common goal," with three study outlines of the application of the statement locally, denominationally, and ecumenically. What follows of the 8,000-word report, "addressed to church members everywhere who are interested in faith and order," is but a brief preview of the essential content for a beginning discussion and implementation at the parish level.

We believe that the unity which is both God's will and his gift to his Church is being made visible as all in each place who are baptized into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord and Saviour are brought by the Holy Spirit into *one* fully committed fellowship, holding the one apostolic faith, preaching the one Gospel, breaking the one bread, joining in common prayer, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all and who at the same time are united with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages in such wise that ministry and members are accepted by all, and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls his people.

It is for such unity that we believe we must pray and work.

This brief description [a slight revision of the St. Andrew's statement] of our objective leaves many questions unanswered. We are not yet of a common mind on the interpretation and the means of achieving the goal we have described. We are clear that unity does not imply simple uniformity of organization, rite or expression. We all confess that sinful self-will operates to keep us separated and that in our human ignorance we cannot discern clearly the lines of God's design for the future. But it is our firm hope that through the Holy Spirit God's will as it is witnessed to in Holy Scripture will be more and more disclosed to us and in us. The achievement of unity will involve nothing less than a death and rebirth of many forms of church life as we have known them. We believe that nothing less costly can finally suffice.

The full report is worth studying, especially the section on "Implications for local church life," as it delineates the opportunities of growing together and responsible ways of breaking through to fresh understandings in concerns for each other, all for "our Lord's sake."

We in America feel the disunity of Christendom more keenly, perhaps, than any other part of the world, with more than 200 varieties of Christian churches, and with sharp divisions between Catholic and Protestant, liberal and evangelical, modernist and fundamentalist, Bible-centered and tradition-centered, static and dynamic church groups. And yet we are all parts of a worldwide fellowship, which owes its allegiance to the one Master whom we all declare to be the Light of the world.

Beginning in each local congregation and community the need for church unity is obvious, with differences unreconciled within congregations and between local church groups, sometimes competing with each other rather than making a corporate witness to the community, with evidences of social, cultural, and racial discriminations. The church cannot effectively be the Church unless its members see themselves in their true light, that is, as members of the one body of Christ in the world. When all convinced Christians are enlightened by the same light—Jesus Christ—and no other, they therefore will feel that they are *one*. But that same light exposes the fact that the churches are divided from one another: they seek to live according to their several lights and by so doing deny Jesus Christ who is their one Light.

One of my parishioners showed me a beautiful Chinese vase which had been broken to bits in shipping. She asked me to see if I could tell where it had been mended. It took a close look indeed to discover the hairline marks inside which indicated where the broken pieces had been joined. In a similar way, church unity

will take time, patience, and care, in order to mend the broken parts, to put back together the many broken fragments, and the hairline cracks may continue to be visible.

No matter how many world gatherings of a few top ecumenical leaders are held, the vitality of all ecumenical activity and oneness in Christ depends on the lives of individual men and women for whom "the Light of the world" is the light of their hearts and souls in everyday life and obedience.

One of the main conclusions of this report was that the present impasse in "intercommunion differences" among the member churches demands an all-out effort to break through to fresh understandings of unity, especially as it is expressed at the Lord's table. The impasse, it said, "presses the churches to re-examine all possible steps that might be discovered, at any and all levels of their denominational life."

The unity section reiterated the biblical injunction to "Fear not," that whatever unity God wills for us is our goal, and that it will take away nothing, but will, rather, enrich and enlarge, with a wide variety and latitude in matters of worship and administration.

Therefore, we approach one another in humility, as forgiving and forgiven Christians, holding fast to the oneness we already have in Christ, giving our allegiance to the one Master whom we all declare to be the Light of the world. But the vitality of all ecumenical activity and oneness in Christ, depends on the lives of individual men and women for whom the Light of the world is the light of their hearts and souls, in their everyday life and obedience. This emphasis appeared like a connecting link in most of the addresses, too, for it is the sticky point which no great ecumenical conference can ignore, and which winds up in each representative's pocket or purse, to carry back home to work out at the personal and local level.

WITNESS

This 7,500-word report of the Witness Section gives the churches an effective and useful document for widening and deepening their Christian witness to and in the world. As with all the reports, the final result was quite different from the "Annotated Agendas," which contained more material than there was time to handle in the section meetings. Again, only a sampling of the report is quoted here for immediate consideration by the member churches through their congregations.

We live in critical times, but it is not because of the desperate nature of the problems of our age that the task of Witness to the Gospel of Christ is urgent today. The urgency of the Church's evangelistic task arises from the Gospel itself, because it is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Christ loves the world, which he died to save. . . .

Nevertheless the urgency of the predicament in which our age finds itself should underline for Christians their duty and their opportunity. The whole world has become for the first time in history an interdependent world, in which the peoples of all lands either must solve their problems of living together in peace or must perish together. We live in an age of revolution, in which immense changes are taking place in every sphere of human life. . . . Today the task of evangelism must be performed in new situations and therefore in new ways. . . .

To communicate the Gospel involves the willingness and the ability of the evangelist to identify himself with those whom he addresses. To get along-side our hearer, to sit where he sits, is the essential condition upon which alone we may claim the right to be heard. . . .

To proclaim the whole Gospel must mean to take seriously the secular causes of men's inability to hear or respond to our preaching. . . . Witness to the Gospel must therefore be prepared to engage in the struggle for social justice and peace; it will have to take the form of humble service and of a practical ministry of reconciliation amidst the actual conflicts of our times. . . . Healing and the relief of distress, the attack upon social abuses and reconciliation, as well as preaching, Christian fellowship and worship, are all bound together in the message that is proclaimed.

Within this whole enterprise of corporate witness, every individual Christian will play his own unique part according to the gifts of the Spirit with which he is endowed. Each stands in his own special place: the missionary in a country that is not his own; the pioneer in new fields of service; the Christian worker in his factory or office or home—each will be conscious that his witness is a part of the one ministry within the whole mission of the Church and that he is the representative of the whole Church. . . .

Both seen and unseen, our witness can be as devastating as an incident I witnessed in a New York hospital. I was waiting on the seventh floor for the slow-coming elevator and was forced to listen to a relative giving a nurse a loud public tongue lashing in the hall, bearing witness to anger, hatred, upset and uncontrolled emotions, leaving an entire hospital wing in an uproar for hours afterward.

Those assigned to the section on *Witness* (and I was one) gave their attention to the many facets of evangelism, seeking to lay down the best lines of approach for reaching modern man in an immoral, often amoral, and secular society.

Meeting in a largely non-Christian land it was inevitable to spend some time seriously considering the Christian approach to those of other religions.

If we are witnesses to Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, his light in us will not be hid under a "meal tub," nor will his compassion burn brightly as a candle's flame only as we kneel in some silent hour of worship. When we are truly his witnesses, his light is carried into and unto the world by the very manner in which we live. This is what we mean when we say *we* are the Church, laity and clergy alike, and that we carry the healing, reconciling ministry of the Church around with us.

In other words, we exist to be the Church in the "place" where we are, and the Church is often judged by what we are in that place. Christians, whom Paul labels "saints," are called to receive the truth about God's nature and plan, undistorted and clearly understood, then to communicate what they know and believe in the same clear, undistorted, and persuasive manner. Our witness is both visible and invisible, and men are attracted or repelled by what they see and hear, both through the sound of our voice and the expression on our face.

At New Delhi many bore testimony to the fact that we can take any image of the world's life we wish and we shall find need for Christian witness that it is God's world, that he has not abandoned it nor abdicated, but that rather he sustains it, loves it, judges and redeems it. His plan is that his light shall penetrate to the ends of the earth and to every depth in human life. And he has called us to be witnesses to *these* things, not to engage in tongue-lashing episodes in public places. It is through us that God speaks to man's fear and frustration in a nuclear age. It is through us that God's indignation and suffering over social and racial injustices are made known. It is through us that God meets and deals with man's hunger and homelessness.

The individual local task in a world vision is to make sure Christ comes unto his own, who receive him and pass him on; to make sure *we* manifest Christ's light by walking in it, and that *we* discern the things of the Spirit which enable the Christian to see his way through the intricacies of life and to lead others safely through them.

Dr. Billy Graham, famed exponent of mass evangelism, an observer at the Assembly, gave what he considered to be the essential ingredients of all Christian witness, or ways to communicate, only some of which were reflected in any of the subsections' reports: through prayer, by the work of the Holy Spirit, by identification in love, by proclamation with authority and simplicity, and by bringing those won into the Christian fellowship,

for without this last step it was, he said, "like putting live eggs under a dead hen."

The Witness Section report placed great importance on the role of the layman in making the Gospel relevant to contemporary society; made it clear that while the gospel is relevant to the needs of every age, its message must be conveyed in the language and thought forms of the 20th century; suggested that local churches establish small "cells" of vocational groups who will try to be "the people of God in their own particular context"; and looked upon "dialogue" as one of the most effective forms of evangelism.

SERVICE

The word service is treated in its broadest sense in this section's report, with very little in the way of what the churches can do in practical terms. This was inevitable with the brevity of the paper and the wide range of subject matter, but there were many hints and clues which should stimulate discussion in every congregation where the report is read and studied with a mind to act.

Christian service, as distinct from the world's concept of philanthropy, springs from and is nourished by God's costly love as revealed by Jesus Christ. Any Christian ethic of service must have its roots there. . . .

We are called to participate in service in all . . . areas of the contemporary world, not because of our human ability or in order to keep up with the ways of the world, but because we accept His call to respond to His redemptive work which is active in every realm of our life.

The report dealt with a complex array of subjects, and explored the churches' responsibilities for encouraging the individual Christian to be active in the public life of his country as well as to strive actively for racial justice and to press most urgently for the inspection and control of nuclear weapons. It declared that the field of public service the churches should lead public opinion, not merely reflect it, and be swift to re-examine their own social service programs in the face of worldwide and rapid social change.

I believe the most practical of all the sections centered in this one on Service, with a heavy concentration on its deeper theological implications beyond a cup of cold water.

No matter how hard we try to remain uninvolved and aloof, we cannot, for in our human society no man can be an island or hope to escape contact with other fellow human beings or to be forever uninfluenced by their plight. All Christians need to make good their obligation to work constantly for such an order of

things as shall treat all men as sons of God, and brothers of God-in-Christ.

It was underscored at New Delhi that all Christians should want to have a share in alleviating the almost unbearable human conditions which exist somewhere at all times, but more is demanded of them than a dollar bill or a few old clothes. They must become personally involved in a very real sense. The most difficult question to answer, once the concern and desire to help have been aroused, is "What must I do?" or "What can I do?" As Christians seek to minister more adequately to the needy areas outside their front doors, they often strike an impasse, for they know not what to do. The faraway is easier to deal with than the near-at-hand. Relief on a global scale is often much more readily shared in than on the local scene, for we can give a check so easily, without being personally involved, to support others who go and do for us. And yet, the global concerns and programs of the churches must find local application, for Christians need to be on every spot ready to serve wherever there is human need, bearing witness to Christ's love and concern in acts of service in one place after another. The most frequent expressions of that love and concern are in areas where there is spiritual hunger, where homelessness means insecurity, and where unprotected sensitiveness is equivalent to lack of clothing.

Today the cup of cold water often means giving moral insight, the visiting in prison often means dealing with loneliness, and feeding the hungry may mean turning men's greed into righteousness, anxiety into faith, and gullibility into wisdom. Man's moral condition reflects an inner spiritual need, and the offer of God's love and forgiveness is often more important than a free meal or a flop or an old pair of shoes. Christian service is evident in the daily work of individuals who seize the innumerable little opportunities for making life more comfortable and happier in their work community as fellow sufferers *and* fellow workers, and making Christ's love known in little acts of thoughtfulness and kindness—lighting the darkness of the street where they live.

"What can I do?" What are the answers for you? Some form of volunteer service, perhaps. There are endless opportunities: a greater sensitiveness to the needs of those around you in the home, perhaps, or in the office; tying into a specific situation near at hand where someone needs you and where only you know of the need and are spiritually strong enough to meet it; giving a larger share of your income in response to worthy appeals from everywhere. Only you can decide. As Christians who are one in

Christ we bring his love to bear on every spot of human need we can, especially on those spots where we stand and where we can and must minister as God gives us awareness, strength, and sensitivity, and uses us as the vehicles of his grace and infinite love.

We are part of the community of mankind, and must of necessity suffer together and survive together, for in bearing one another's burdens, we find healing and redemption and fulfillment. The Christian gospel is gibberish unless the love of God we profess is made manifest in some form of witness in service. It is just here, in the simple and uncomplicated acts of service, we find our quickest response in unity and mission at every level.

After considering the theological principles underlying the service given by Christians, the Service Section report ranged over the changing sociological patterns in the present-day world, the problems raised by the growth of science and technology, the implications of nuclear armaments, the clash of cultures around the world, questions of freedom, order, and power, the struggle for race equality, and other public issues. The report pointed out that in each situation there were new opportunities for Christian service in the modern world.

In all these section reports on Unity, Witness, and Service, there are so many practical points to underscore and begin to deal with at the local level that the six years before the next Assembly will not be long enough to accomplish them. But all that is asked of the churches now is to take one step, make a beginning, pursue just one suggestion, in order that New Delhi conversations and conclusions may become local and lead to ecumenical movement among the churches where they are.

At this point in writing the Assembly Report I remembered the snake charmers who did such a land-office business each noonday as the assembly adjourned for lunch. The sound of the flute was heard as the delegates flowed out of the Vigyan Bhavan hurrying to their buses or taxis. Across the street cobras by the bagful were placed in baskets and swayed to the music with heads erect and hoods fully spread. Cameras clicked, and soon after the flutist stopped his shrill music, he was among the camera fiends asking for his "fee," ranging from one to five rupees, depending on his mood and that of the crowd. My picture cost me one rupee, but it was worth it. Usually a mongoose was struggling nearby on a chain attached to an iron stake. The owner offered to stage a fight between the cobra and the mongoose for as low as three rupees and

fifty NP (the new units of 100 naye paise per rupee replacing the old 16 annas per rupee of the British-inspired currency system). Apparently the mongoose, which is extremely valuable, always kills the snake, which is apparently cheap. Occasionally the festive atmosphere was increased by a dancing bear, again with picture taking allowed, for a price.

We were bedeviled daily by sellers of picture postcards and other oddments as we went to our buses. Such persistence was topped only by the small beggar children who stuck like leeches as they walked along beside us, telling their sad tales.

We were shocked to discover the pittance paid our bus starter—only one rupee, about twenty cents, a day. No wonder they wore dirty rags for clothes. But the Indians were cheerful, courteous, and pleasant at all times, especially our bus drivers and conductors. Our bus driver always burned a stick of incense as we left each evening from the Vigyan Bhavan for our hotels—perhaps this was a good thing. I never discovered why—perhaps to ward off any evil the Christians might have brought.

We Received a Distinguished Visitor

A very special event during the Assembly was the visit of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Thunderous and prolonged applause greeted him upon his arrival. Not a seat was vacant in the Vigyan Bhavan and standing room was at a premium, with a heavy influx of the press and photographers. Mr. Nehru had on the white congress cap, a brown tunic, with a bright red rose in the button-hole in the center of the chest, and wore white jodphur-type trousers. He was greeted and welcomed at the entrance to the Vigyan Bhavan by Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur, president of the New Delhi Committee for the Assembly, former Minister of Health in India, and India's leading Christian laywoman in public life.

The Prime Minister was introduced by Dr. Fry, who recalled the visits of Queen Juliana of the Netherlands (then Princess Regent) to the First Assembly, the then President of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower, to the Second Assembly, and Mr. Nehru himself to a meeting of the Central Committee in Lucknow in 1952. Dr. Fry said his present visit added "a new luster to the Third Assembly."

This great Indian leader, in his twenty-minute address, commended the delegates for bringing religious insights to bear on current international problems. He advised them to contribute

toward peace by encouraging their people and governments to follow "the friendly approach" method instead of aggravating "the war psychosis." Nehru deplored the cold war and urged the adoption of "a peaceful approach" to peace, not giving up "any vital thing the people consider important, but putting forward that matter in a peaceful way."

His Excellency's visit was a high point in the Assembly program, as demonstrated so enthusiastically by all who were present to greet him.

Another special event happened without advance notice, the placing of a wreath of flowers on the Rajghat, the national shrine on the banks of the Yamuna River, where the body of Mahatma Gandhi was cremated, by the presidents of the World Council accompanied by the officers of the Central Committee. Some persons questioned the appropriateness of this gesture of friendliness and honor to one of India's greatest sons. At a press conference, Dr. Sittler explained that there was nothing wrong in a clergyman placing a wreath on Gandhi's shrine. "The Mahatma," he said, "moved with great radiance and made a great gift to us all. It is not necessary to find a biblical base for one human being to acknowledge the gift of another."

We Struggled in Committees

As the committees met and worked on their specialized agendas, the Assembly dealt with the important structure and pattern of the internal operation of the World Council for the post-Assembly period, making decisions as to functions and aims, and approved or amended the outline of the several programs of the divisions, departments, and commissions as given in the "Work Book."

In spite of the routine work involved it was a great relief to get into a small group where discussions could be carried on more freely and in face-to-face encounter. The committees were made up of from twenty-five to thirty members, each breaking up into even smaller subcommittees to facilitate the far-too-long agendas each one was given to cope with. The procedures and problems were almost identical to those of the sections. In dealing with committee matters the members leaned heavily on the staff who were experts in the work, and those on the several committees who were conversant with their specific responsibilities. However, many fresh insights were discovered just because of this newness

to a subject and unfamiliarity with it among some of the delegates and advisers assigned. It usually fell to a very few in each committee to get the actual work done and to shape up the report, under the guiding hands of the chairman, the secretary, and the staff person.

The most important follow-up work of all the Assembly committees will be done by the several working committees appointed by the Central Committee as the servants and arms of the World Council of Churches for doing the continuing work of the divisions, commissions, and departments. These working committees meet at least once a year, usually in the summer immediately preceding the annual meeting of the Central Committee to which they must report.

Since most of the committee reports were really recommendations to the Central Committee and the working committees of divisions and departments, with an occasional recommendation to the churches for their participation in some study or action, only a very few selected matters will be reported in summary here, including several resolutions adopted by the Assembly.

Among other things, the Committee Reports called for the following items:

New ecumenical studies.¹⁵

A consultation between pacifists and nonpacifists on "The Christian Witness to Peace."

The reorganization of the Secretariat for the study of "Religious Liberty."

A wider observance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.¹⁶

Theological language to be made intelligible to contemporary people throughout the world.

A continuation of the "monthly letter" on evangelism.

A follow-up on the rapid social change study by one on "Moral Issues in the Change from Traditional to Dynamic Societies."

The churches to act "more resolutely" in the face of "Race and Ethnic Tensions," to "renounce all forms of segregation or dis-

¹⁵The purpose of such studies is "to set forth the advanced issues of world import which affect the life of the churches; to provide a means whereby the churches may be led from the stage of understanding one another to the stage of study in depth of their common obedience; and to increase the growth of ecumenical consciousness and conviction."

¹⁶Order copies of the material for this yearly observance (January 18-25 or at any other time of the year) from the World Council office.

crimination and to work for their abolition within their own life and within society," and to pray for and give moral support to those who lead in this struggle.

A recognition by the churches of the fact that "almost as horrible as war" (an offense to God) are such evils as "subversion, terrorism, corruption of police and public values, concentration camps and genocide."

"An Appeal to All Governments and People" to work zealously for peace.

A new "Basis" for membership: "The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit."

An emphatic denunciation of antisemitism.

The churches to make a strong espousal of religious liberty, holding religious freedom to be the fundamental right of all men.

More "mature and open-minded men and women" to attend the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey.

Two new official languages to be considered—Russian and Spanish.

A model annual general post-Assembly budget of \$750,000.

The name of one of the divisions to be changed to "Division of Interchurch Aid, Refugee, and World Service."

Special attention to be given to the hearing of the first report of the new "Division of World Mission and Evangelism."

Social studies on "The Role of the Church in Modern Industrial Society."

The appointment of an editorial secretary.

The new "Secretariat for Ethnic and Race Relations" to give serious consideration to racial and ethnic tensions.

The popularization of Faith and Order discussions so that congregations may share in them intelligently, and the achievement of wider distribution of all Faith and Order literature.

The "Study of the Word of God and the Living Faiths of Men" to be continued.

A study on "The Missionary Structure of the Congregation."

The churches to give special attention to areas of "acute human need" and problems of "migration."

Increased activity in religious broadcasting (both radio and television) and films.

More serious consideration to be given to relations with non-member churches (Protestant).

Special training to be given to lay leaders and to hold regional conferences on "The Laity: The Church in the World."

There was an almost endless list of other recommendations and important items of committee business, which can be found in the official *Report of the Assembly*,¹⁷ a narrative account of the proceedings from day to day, including reports of the committees and sections, and all important documents of the Assembly.

We Sent Forth a Message

In attempting to sum up the spirit and content of the Assembly for passing on to all those who could not attend, and for a word direct to the outside world as a declaration of new purpose for the churches as they live and work in that world, a message was formulated with great care and sent forth from the Assembly as its unanimous conclusion. Couched in comparatively simple language, designed to be clearly understood by all, it will be distributed for use in every congregation of every member church and will receive worldwide attention.

Before the reading of the Message, the chairman of the committee, Dr. Kathleen M. Bliss, a highly respected laywoman of England, gave a most illuminating introduction. She said the committee had tried to discover what currents there were moving in the Assembly, and whether they could be identified as the movement of the Holy Spirit. They actually found three, she said, all of them important. First, there was a consciousness of the new churches in the Assembly. No longer was there a feeling that the World Council was West-centered and West-dominated. It was apparent that Christianity now has a home everywhere. Second, there was an undercurrent of hope and confidence, in relation to modern man's eager search for life, and a new sense of oneness with the common man, especially in his struggle against darkness and evil. Third, there was a new emphasis on the "uniqueness of Christ as the one and only Saviour," and a far greater sensitivity to God at work in the world. In this Unity the Assembly found its call to Witness and Service.

The committee also considered whom they were addressing. It was quite clear that the congregations of the churches would be the target. Therefore, the Message should be in the form of a

¹⁷Edited by Dr. Samuel McCrae Cavert, to be published by Association Press, N. Y., ready in midsummer, 1962. 350 pages.

simple letter, briefly written, designed to speak to every member of every church, a word related to the world around those whom it addressed. It was designed also to be read in a service of worship, and therefore a list of affirmations were appended, to which the committee felt the members of the Assembly were committed. The reading of the Message by a young New Testament professor from Scotland, Robin Barbour, was impressive and effective, but inevitably there were suggestions for revisions with a reference back to the committee. The following form is the result of a common attempt to speak a simple but certain and relevant word to the churches. "The Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches meeting in New Delhi addresses this letter to the member churches and their congregations."

We rejoice and thank God that we experience here a fellowship as deep as before and wider. New member churches coming in considerable numbers and strength both from the ancient Orthodox tradition of Eastern Christendom and from Africa, Asia, Latin America and other parts of the world visibly demonstrate that Christianity now has a home in every part of the world. In this fellowship we are able to speak and act freely, for we are all "partakers together with Christ." Together we have sought to understand our common calling to witness, service and unity.

We are deeply grateful for the prayers of countless Christian people and for the study of our theme, "Jesus Christ, the Light of the World," by which many of you have shared in our work. *Now we return to our churches to do, with you, the things that have been shown to us here.*

All over the world new possibilities of life, freedom and prosperity are being actively, even passionately pursued. In some lands there is disillusionment with the benefits that a technically expert society can produce; and over all there hangs the shadow of vast destruction through war. Nevertheless mankind is not paralyzed by these threats. The momentum of change is not reduced. We Christians share men's eager quest for life, for freedom from poverty, oppression and disease. God is at work opening possibilities for mankind in our day. He is at work even when the powers of evil rebel against Him and call down His judgment. We do not know by what ways God will lead us: but our trust is in Jesus Christ who is now and always our eternal life.

When we speak to men as Christians we must speak the truth of our faith: that there is only one way to the Father, namely Jesus Christ his Son. On that one way we are bound to meet our brother. We meet our brother Christian. We meet also our brother man; and before we speak to him of Christ, Christ has already sought him.

Christ is the way, and therefore we have to walk together witnessing to Him and serving all men. This is His commandment. There is no greater service to men than to tell them of the living Christ and no more effective witness than a life offered in service. The indifference or hostility of men may check our open speaking but God is not silenced. He speaks through the worship and the sufferings of His Church. Her

prayers and patience are, by His gracious acceptance of them, made part of the witness He bears to Christ.

We need to think out together in concrete terms the forms of Christian service for today and together act upon them. In no field has Christian cooperation been more massive and effective than in service to people in every kind of distress. There is no more urgent task for Christians than to work together for community within nations and for peace with justice and freedom among them, so that the causes of much contemporary misery may be rooted out. We have to take our stand against injustice caused to any race, or to any man on account of his race. We have to learn to make a Christian contribution to the service of men through secular agencies. Christian love requires not only the sharing of worldly goods but costly personal service. All over the world young people are giving an example in their spontaneous offering of themselves.

We must seek together the fullness of Christian unity. We need for this purpose every member of the Christian family, of Eastern and Western tradition, ancient churches and younger churches, men and women, young and old, of every race and every nation. Our brethren in Christ are given to us, not chosen by us. In some things our convictions do not yet permit us to act together, but we have made progress in giving content to the unity we seek. *Let us everywhere find out the things which in each place we can do together now; and faithfully do them*, praying and working always for that fuller unity which Christ wills for His Church.

This letter is written from the World Council of Churches' Assembly. But the real letter written to the world today does not consist of words. We Christian people, wherever we are, are a letter from Christ to His world "written not with ink but with the spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts." The Message is that God in Christ has reconciled the world to Himself. Let us speak it and live it with joy and confidence "for it is the God who said 'Let light shine out of darkness' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

The Message was read on the First Sunday in Advent, 1961, as an inspired beginning for the new Christian year. The following affirmations were meant to be used with the message, if read within the context of a service of worship, and were first used at the closing service of worship of the Assembly:

We confess Jesus Christ, Saviour of men and the light of the world;

Together we accept His Command;

We commit ourselves anew to bear witness to Him among men in love, that love which He alone imparts;

We accept afresh our calling to make visible our unity in Him;

We pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit for our task.

This, then, is the Message from the Third Assembly which the delegates hurried home to implement, by God's help and yours, following the solemn closing service. Originally scheduled for the *shamiana*, it was transferred to the Vigyan Bhavan because of the cold weather and the persistent colds among the delegates. Much had been hoped for and much had been expected. The responsibility for what happened, and what must now be done because of it, made all present humble and unworthy before the mighty task laid upon the representatives of the churches who had been responsible for the Third Assembly and its work. This last gathering of the Assembly was also joyful, with thanksgiving for what had been accomplished by God's help, in spite of all remaining to be done in order to fulfill our callings to Unity, Witness, and Service. The Christians from New Delhi came in large numbers and filled all the extra chairs placed in every available space in the large meeting hall of the Vigyan Bhavan, with many standing in the back.

The service was conducted by the new Indian member of the Presidium, the Rev. Dr. David G. Moses, and the sermon was preached by another one of the new presidents, the ex-U-boat Commander, the Rev. Dr. Martin Niemöller, who was Hitler's personal prisoner for eight years. The service itself really summed up the Assembly in its petitions of self-examination and intercession, and its declarations of thanksgiving, and in these words from the sermon—"We shall have patiently to study and to work and to wait and to pray for his light, that we may be able to find and to recognize the way on which he will be with us, because it is *his* way."

The need for God's grace was recognized by everyone at the Assembly and in this final service great emphasis was placed on the availability of that grace only through Jesus Christ, the Light of the world. After the final benediction the participants scattered to all parts of the world to test their vocation as light, as those who were sent forth with his blessing upon them, to go and do for him.

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PART III



THE VISION WE CAUGHT

"Now we return to our churches to do . . . the things that have been shown to us. . . ." In other words, we are committed to an implementation of the ecumenical vision—the vision of the World for Christ—where we are, by God's help, and the help of all those who are in the Christian fellowship in "that place."

In anticipation of this chapter I asked the Most Reverend Archbishop Lord Fisher of Lambeth, the 99th Archbishop of Canterbury, who retired in the spring of 1961, to draw on his long ecumenical experience and write a few historical and prophetic notes as a connecting link between the present facts and the distant vision, which he most graciously did as follows.

If I had to put my experience of the Ecumenical Movement into a few brief paragraphs, I should try to distinguish three stages in the life of the World Council of Churches.

Getting to know each other and trust each other.

That can only come about by talking together and sharing in a common enterprise. . . . This talking together is not only about Church faith and order or Church relations but about anything in human affairs which concerns the kingdom of God for good or for ill. . . . In some parts of some churches Christian people have had enough of simply "increasing friendly relations," and want to see something done. Divine discontent often has to dwell together with godly patience for what seem to us long spells of time. . . . Meanwhile in a very short time the whole aspect of Christendom has been changed from one of spiritual separation to one of spiritual fellowship. This is the stage of the New Spirit.

Defining principles and contradictions.

That must, of course, come next, and a vast amount of exploratory work has been done, clarifying even when it does not reconcile. . . . This is the stage of the "yes—but." There is much common ground, with much general agreement to hearten us—but. . . . In this stage there are always some who can see over the barriers and find they are not really so tall that they cannot be scaled. But for the most part still the leaders are afraid . . . of putting out into the deep, . . . until the impulse of God comes upon his people to let . . . go and swim for it. Stage two is the stage of the Old Body, taking its measurements and testing its blood pressures at varying altitudes.

Discovering that there are no principles or problems which are not in the kingdom of God personal and pastoral, to be settled under God by the laws of probability revealed by love.

Once we had to know how correct we all were. . . . We must now produce understandings between churches which will admit members of one church into the full freedom of a sister church without inhibitions or reservations. The sooner and the more wholeheartedly we get into this, the next stage, the better. . . . Yet in "The Church Militant here in earth" we have to deal with particular churches, each with their own histories, idiosyncrasies, strengths and weaknesses. . . . There is no reason to suppose that organic union in the Universal Church means one system of doctrine, discipline and government. . . . It is not a Federation or anything like it. It is the triumphant solution of the age-long problem of the one and the many—the Universal Church in every particular church, and each particular church in the Universal Church. . . . So that each particular church is doing its work, in coordination with the other particular churches of Christendom, for the edifying of that Body which is the Church of our Lord . . . , the congregation of his people travelling together in one company through all countries and all ages to the kingdom of God in heaven.

Dr. Fisher's three-phase delineation of the ecumenical movement has considerable bearing on the ecumenical vision, which we must examine and ponder in the light of the two words "ecumenical" and "world."

The word "ecumenical" contains ever more and more of "the whole inhabited earth" in its larger meaning, beyond co-operation and conversation. With the Russian Orthodox now as a member church, the Roman Catholics more and more interested in theological discussion with non-Roman Catholic theologians, and the multitude of evangelical churches not so standoffish—two of them at least are now members—the post-Assembly period should add a new dimension to the worldwideness of the ecumenical movement.

Did the Third Assembly, meeting in an Asian setting, bring forth a whisper too small to be heard and heeded, or a shattering

roar of revelation and coherent light seen and heard around the world? When those who were at New Delhi are confronted with a world bewildered and torn by its own international anarchy and inhumanity, how can they apply "Jesus Christ the Light of the world"? What possible meaning can there be in John's statement that "in him is no darkness at all"?

In spite of the world's darkness and the often feeble shining of Christ's light through the churches, the Christian Church is here to stay, and those who gathered at the Third Assembly made it clear that the world's business was the churches' business, and they scattered to their homelands with a larger sense of commitment and urgency.

Those who were at New Delhi are committed Christians who realize the impossibility of any person or nation or continent, or any part of the Christian Church, remaining in isolation from atomic fallout or the ideological death struggle, who refuse to panic or ignore the unlimited ills abroad in the world, centering their lives in the Person of Jesus Christ who, they believe, holds the answers.

The "ecumenical vision" is much broader than its organized manifestations in councils of churches at the local, national, and world levels. As one bishop put it, "To deal with the Church as if she really had nothing to do with the one Lord Christ but only with the opinions of men, as if there were no one truth and one Lord and one faith at the heart of our Church, that is unbearable. And if that is so to you as it is to me, then there is no escape for us from the painful, difficult, uncomfortable, costly encounter which we call the Ecumenical Movement."

There must be contagion through inspiring leadership and fellowship if the ecumenical vision is to matter and become a vital and living reality among us, in the places where people live, say in your home town. The big question is how to bring the great ecumenical issues and matters in focus for your community and relate them so they do really matter.

Turn back and reread Dr. Fisher's third stage in the ecumenical movement. As we go forth under the inspiration of the ecumenical vision gained at New Delhi, this next stage is our goal. We must head for the as yet "unoccupied places" of the world, carrying Christ's light "to people in unbelief, in conflict and in distress." As we stay together, go forward together, in common "commitment to manifesting God in Christ to the world" as Light and

Power, Hope and Love, for all men, in all conditions, everywhere and next door, we are implementing the ecumenical vision.

The follow-up to the Third Assembly must begin in the life of the congregations, making New Delhi a household word and one of the very early events in what has been called "the second great Reformation of Christendom."

The role most of us will play is not on such a grandiose scale, no matter how far-reaching and all-encompassing our dreams are. We must be content for the moment with a humbler role, that of gaining as much knowledge as we can of what happened at the Third Assembly, then acting on it so far as we can locally, with the firm conviction that "there is a part which every Christian can play."

As we ponder the road ahead for the ecumenical movement, we realize that no one person, no matter how dedicated, can know what God is saying to the churches in every area about next steps in their growing together, especially locally. Only those who are in that situation and seeking to be sensitive to the will of God for them can know that and be ready to respond to the leading of the Spirit. The making of such responses is one of the most urgent tasks for each individual Christian, parish, and community, if New Delhi is to "get off the ground."

We must be those with "ecumenical feet" to be on the move, keeping their vision, their heads, and their commitment through the hard times of witnessing as God bids them speak and do for him, remembering that each individual can diminish or add to the problems of the world where all of these problems inevitably begin and end, where each person is, as he confronts his brother, as one having been signed with the sign of the cross.

PART IV



**WE SHARE
WHAT WE SAW**

The Assembly Story in Pictures

Photographs
through the courtesy
of JOHN P. TAYLOR



PART IV





THE ASSEMBLY IN SESSION

**The Great Hall of the
VIGYAN BHAVAN**

THE OPENING SERVICE

**In the SHAMIANA
with Procession of
Participants**

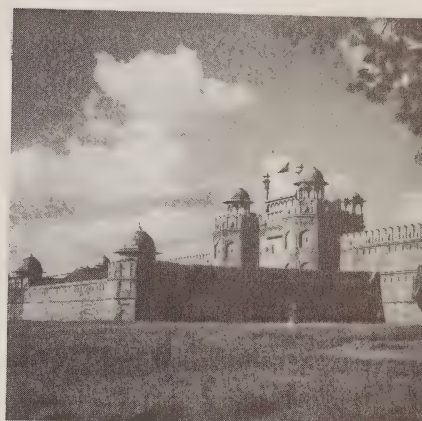




DELHI

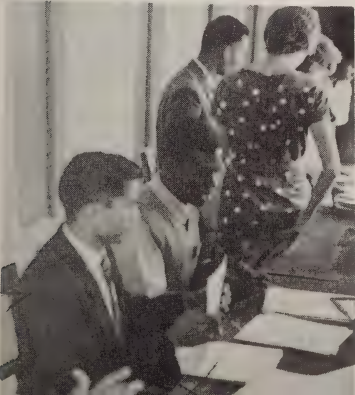
New and Old





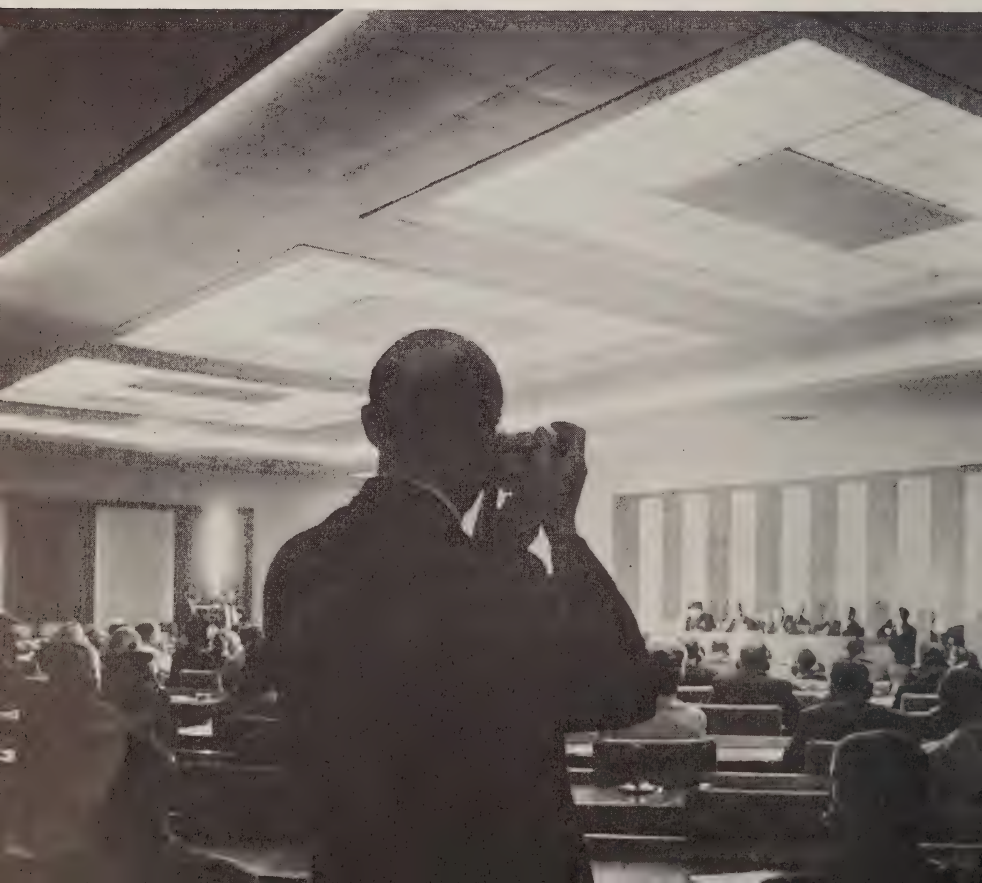


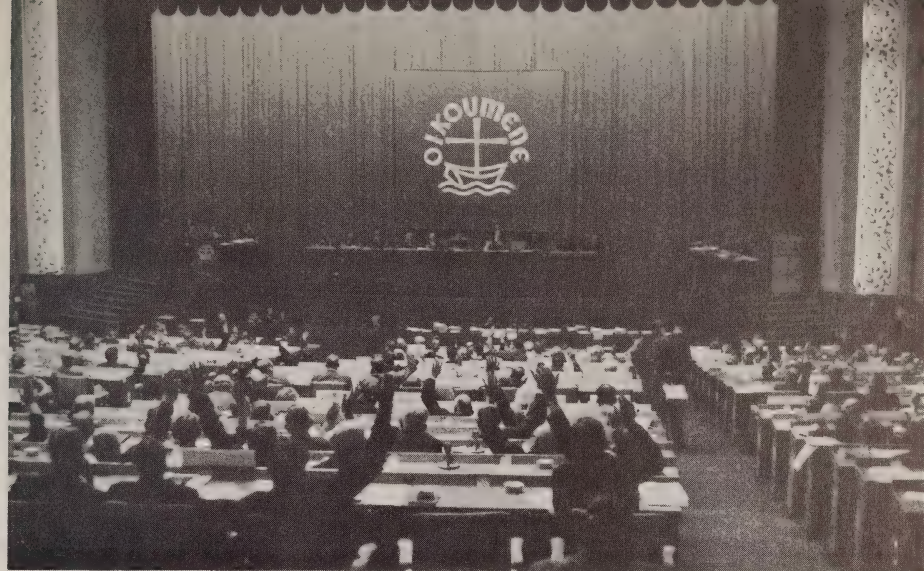
**AT
RANDOM**





AT WORK

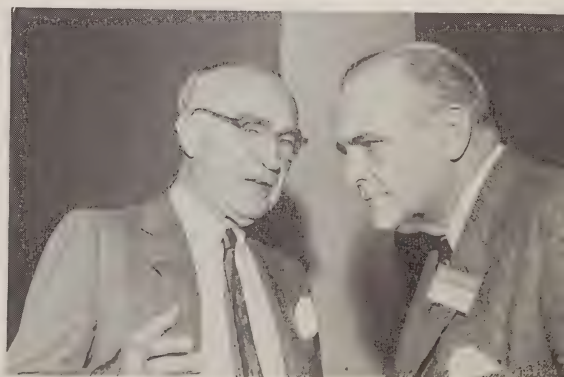








LISTENING

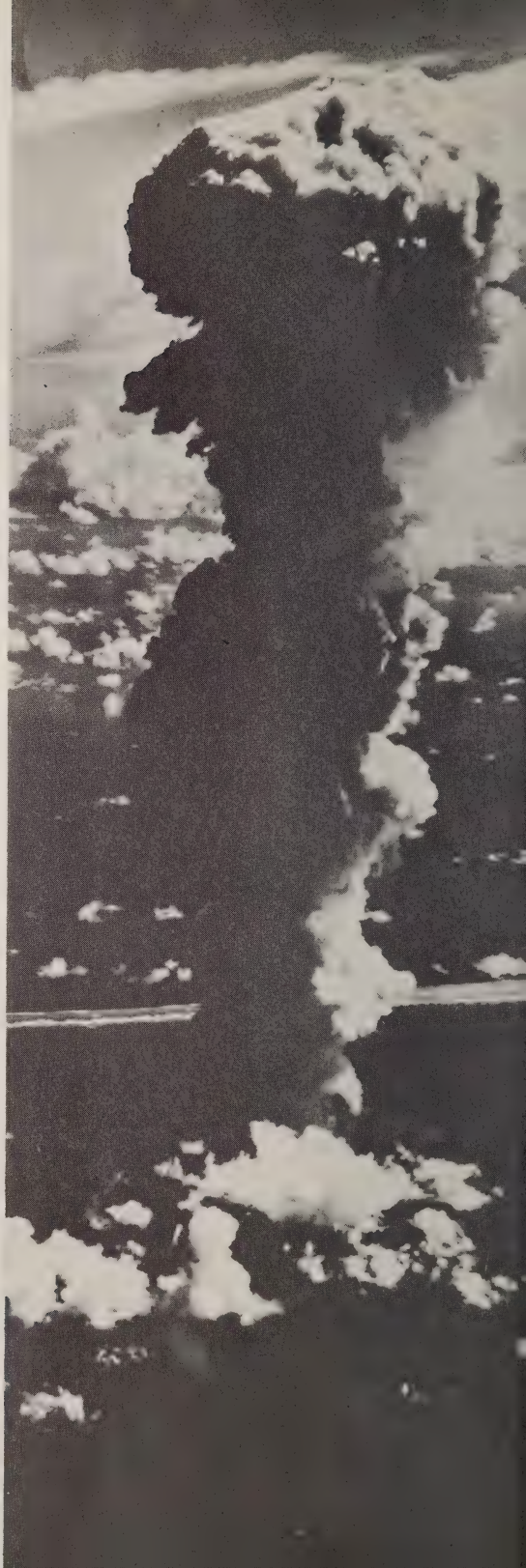


SPECIAL EVENTS





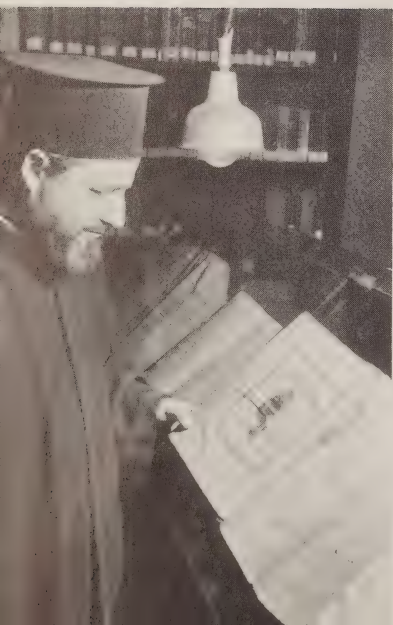
**JESUS
CHRIST
THE
LIGHT
OF
THE
WORLD**







UNITY







WITNESS



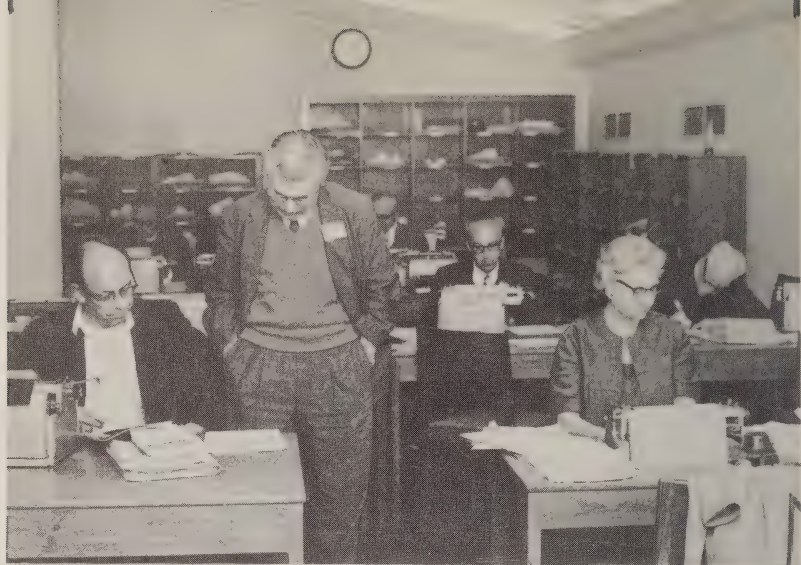




SERVICE







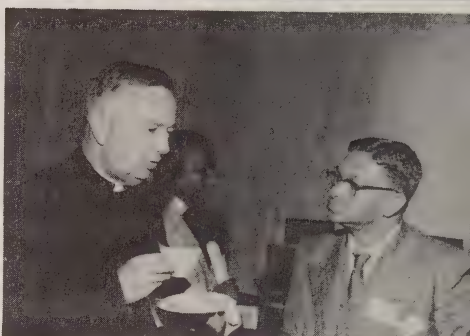
PRESS



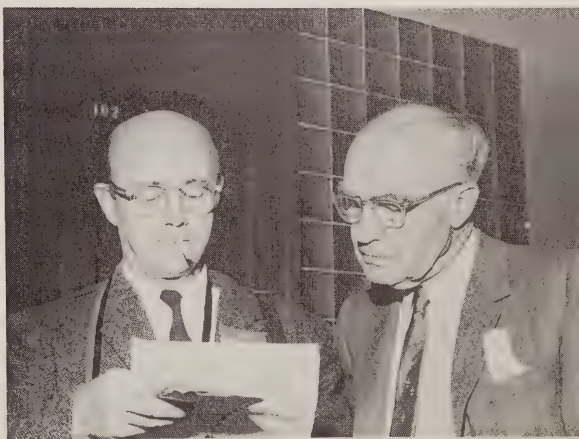


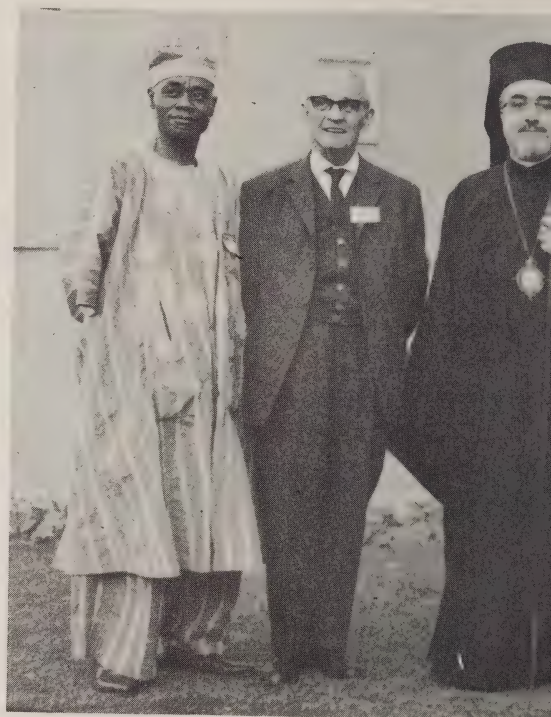
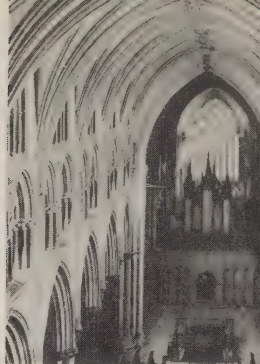
AND BROADCASTING



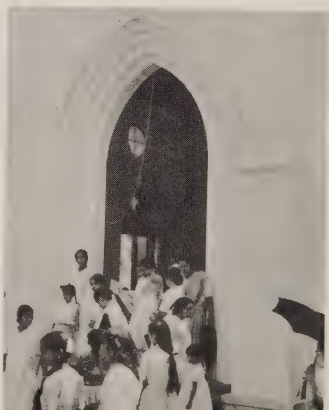


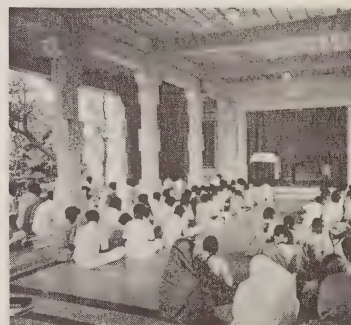
INTER- LUDES





THE PR





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THE CEN



AL COMMITTEE



THE CLOSING SERVICE



**FAREWELL
TO
INDIA**

PART V



STUDY GUIDES

On the Main Theme

1. No theme is ever considered in isolation, but always in relation to something else—like churches to Christians. How can the cross-question technique, illustrated in the Bible study section of the preparatory booklet, which formed the basis of the discussions at the Assembly, be used effectively in local groups? Review this part of the preparatory booklet. Begin at that point and carry on from there.

2. Try to re-enact in your study group the method of discussion used in the sections as they moved from the “Annotated Agendas” to the final report to the Assembly.

3. Try to discover how other religions use the word “light,” and then note how the Christian religion uses it in the theme.

4. Take the following Bible passages referring to the theme, give one to each person present, allow fifteen minutes of silence for private meditation; then ask all to share their findings “around the circle.” Isaiah 9:1-9; Luke 4:14-30; Ezekiel, chapter 1; Genesis 1:1-4; Isaiah 49:1-7; Philippians 2:1-8; John 1:1-18; John 12:20-36; Colossians 1:9-20; 2 Corinthians 4:1-6; 5:14-21; Isaiah 58:1-12; 1 John 1:5—2:11; Revelation 21:1-5; 21:22—22:5; Matthew 5:14-16.

5. What do you think Bishop Noth meant when he said “Jesus Christ is not the light of a race, a class, a culture or a period, but he seeks out the darkness where it is to be found”?

6. "Where He awakens faith, hope and love, His life dispels the rule of darkness." Can you produce any concrete evidence?

7. If Jesus Christ is the Light of the whole world, He must be made known to the world in every possible way. Consider afresh the ways in which this can be done, and the forms it can take, by your congregation or group, or by you.

8. Bishop Noth made three points:

(a) The claim and the promise: "*I* am the light of the world."

(b) The confession: *Thou* art the Light of the world.

(c) The witness: *He* is the Light of the world.

Should there not be a fourth point? *You* are the light of the world. Discuss the meaning of each one for you and your group.

9. Look more closely at the difference between "unexcited" atoms and "excited" atoms, and the possibilities of producing the latter kind in your group.

10. D. T. Niles summed up the Assembly's quiet determination to go and do things in what may be the clarion call for the beginning of the second reformation. He said people want "action at the local level. . . . The ecumenical movement has declared certain principles, found certain things in common. Now let's go do something about it. . . . Urgency! That's the one thing we're after. Study? Yes! But study that leads somewhere, that moves us into local manifestations of the things we discover we can and must do together, now, where we are!" What is there in this statement for your group?

11. Evaluate and amplify the following statement found in one of the addresses: "Since more light is needed when the situation is darkest, laymen may be tempted to ease their consciences either by retreating into some ecclesiastical activity or by moving to some other place in the world in which there seems to be more light." Do you agree that "To do either of these is to be defeated in the situation"?

On Unity

With a pencil in your hand go back over the material on "The Sections" and "The Section Reports," and to Dr. Sittler's address, "Called to Unity." Circle all the spots which appear good starting points for a discussion in your local situation. Formulate them into questions. Use them, or the following, to get things started in your study group.

1. See what will happen in your community while "attempting together a break-through in the manifestation of church unity (witness and service) in each local place."

2. What bearing does this statement by J. H. Oldham in 1938 have on your community in 1962? "Study must be undertaken by the churches *in common*, for the new forces are world forces; they will sooner or later affect the life of every church, and it is therefore essential that on this point the churches should learn from each other and share with each other whatever light God has given to them in their attempt to face new and unprecedented situations."

3. Try out that formula of "one little action on one little front" as applied to the word "reconciliation," which means "bringing back together." Try it out in several ways:

- (a) As between estranged brothers.
- (b) As between "separated" parts of the same congregation.
- (c) As between "divided" or "indifferent" neighboring churches.
- (d) As between those inside and those outside the church.
- (e) As between clergy and laity.
- (f) As between man and God.

4. Does this analogy, quoted by Dr. Samuel McCrae Cavert, have any meaning for your group? "Association in the Christian community should be like that in an old-fashioned Russian household living in quarters divided into several compartments, which permit the different members to feel at home with their own style of arrangements, but which have doors opening so freely that none is excluded from a common family life."¹ Is this the way you envision "The Coming Great Church"?

5. How can a local congregation be given a feeling of being part of the worldwide Christian Church? What about the bond of prayer? How have you answered the appeal of Christians from every land to "pray for us"?

6. How can the issues of ecumenicity and unity be kept separate and yet related, and, in the light of what happened at New Delhi, create a new dimension for local conversation and participation?

7. What do you think is meant by this statement agreed on at New Delhi? "Church union will eventually entail nothing less than the death and rebirth of many of the various churches' forms and practices."

¹Page 164, *On the Road to Christian Unity*, Harper and Brothers, N. Y., 1961.

8. Where would you begin "an all-out effort to break through to fresh understandings of unity, especially as it is expressed at the Lord's table," and just where would you begin to press your church "to re-examine all possible next steps that might be discovered, at any and all levels of your denominational life"? Have you tried any open communion services in your community? Did your church officially approve or condemn?

9. How many of these practical ways for the "pilgrim church" to manifest local unity as it lives and moves toward ultimate unity have been tried in your community—"common worship, Bible study groups, prayer cells, joint visitation, common witness"?

10. Why not plan together now for a citywide, interdenominational (including Roman Catholic) observance of the next "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity"?

11. Why not make a definite plan now for learning the beliefs and practices of all the other churches in your community?

12. See the three study outlines in the full section report on Unity and concentrate on the first one—applying the St. Andrew's statement locally.

13. How can unity among Christians be found in each school, factory, office, and congregation?

14. Try to work out a five-finger exercise on unity—a five-fold manifestation locally.²

On Witness

Try again to work out your own study points by rereading the materials on "The Sections" and "The Section Reports," and Dr. Devanandan's address, "Called to Witness." Circle once again in pencil the points which seem likely to provoke a good discussion in your local situation. Start from there. The following questions are but substitutes for your own personal selection of material for your own study group.

1. Double check your community's attitude, and that of your own local congregation, on two counts:

(a) Concern for the common rights and dignities of your Jewish neighbors.

(b) Concern for any discrimination or persecution of whatever race or ethnic group is living in your neighborhood.

²Such as prayer, Bible study, personal service, co-operation, interchange of worship, and the like.

Are you and the members of your Christian fellowship bearing witness in these situations to the Light which is Christ?

2. The Christian dialogue with other religions is an important part of Christian witness, asking and answering questions, standing with "downright intrepidity and radical humility," confronting the other faiths with the Christian faith. What is most needed in your community, the Christian approach to the Jew, the Communist, the Humanist, the Secularist, the Existentialist, the Zen Buddhist, the Muslim, the Agnostic, or the so-called Atheist? Where would you start your conversation with each one?³

3. As a protest against the acute housing shortage in London, with more and more homeless families, the Bishops of London and Southwark led a torchlight procession beginning at St. Paul's Cathedral on the third Sunday afternoon in December, with the Christmas reminder of "no room in the inn" as the inspiration for the demonstration, and ending with a carol service in Southwark Cathedral. Do you consider this London episode a good example of unified Christian witness for Christian service? Any examples closer to home?

4. Do you agree that Christian evangelism should begin to stress dialogue techniques in spreading the gospel (even "dialogue sermons") rather than straight preaching?

5. Do you believe that churches will have to count on laymen for a bigger share in expanding Christianity? If so, what is your denomination doing about it locally, nationally?

6. Discuss the implications of the two phrases "communication about" and "communication between," that is "communication about" what God has done and is doing for men in Christ, which may eventually result in restoring "communication between" God and man, and among men in the deeper levels of the Spirit.

7. Have you any experience to show that small Christian "cell" groups may be able to win the unchurched in many areas where conventional church programs are proving unsuccessful? If not, why not establish a few small "cells" made up of vocational and business groups, who will try to be "the people of God in their own particular context"? Here is the lay Christian frontier calling for volunteers.

8. Try Christian dialogue in communicating the gospel, by "listening first, then showing how the gospel meets the need of the times as Christians have learned to understand it." Remember

³See such helps as "The Christian Approach Series," Edinburgh House Press, 2 Eaton Gate, London S.E. 1; *Christian Faith and Other Faiths*, by Stephen C. Neill, Oxford University Press, N. Y. 1961; *Religion and the Christian Faith*, by Hendrik Kraemer, Westminster Press; and others.

these points of good witnessing: "identification" and "alongside" and "speaking his language" and "understanding his milieu."

9. List some of the "new situations" in which the "new ways" of evangelism must be performed.

10. Pin down and elaborate the new approach in the three neglected areas of "youth, the worker, and the intellectual," noting the special characteristics of each. What about "jazz" in a church service, or the parson who discusses religion in a "tavern," or the statement "to swing is to affirm," as they relate to youth? Is there danger in too close association with the secular?

11. Small groups have often been found to be a valuable method of encouraging true dialogue. Why not organize one and find out.

12. Begin to test your vocation in the light of the statement that "every individual Christian will play his own unique part" as "each stands in his own special place."

13. Should not every time of worship end with a commission to go forth as a witness of Christ in and to the world? Check your last time of commissioning in worship and what happened because of it.

14. Explain what you think Dr. Cavert meant when he insisted that "every local church has its existence only by being the embodiment of the whole church in that particular place. Therefore, local and ecumenical are not separate and distinct, for in the local is the embodiment of the whole world, and each little Christian community is not *a* church but *the* church."⁴

On Service

To prepare to tackle this subject, reread the material on "The Sections" and "The Section Reports," and Professor Takenaka's address, "Called to Service," along with the account of the "drama experiment" of the Division on Interchurch Aid and Service to Refugees. Use the same technique of circling in pencil those hints and clues for starting a possible "chain reaction" of discussion, keeping in mind the study group you will lead or share in.



1. What changes are taking place in your community? What has your parish done to consider its responsibility for such changes and to seek a deeper understanding of the moral and spiritual issues underlying them?

⁴*Op. cit.*, p. 141.

2. A whole series of study sessions could be based on this eloquent paragraph by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was martyred by the Nazis. "The hungry man needs bread and the homeless man needs a roof; the dispossessed need justice and the lonely need fellowship. The undisciplined need order and the slave needs freedom. To allow the hungry man to remain hungry would be blasphemy against God and one's neighbor, for what is nearest to God is precisely the need of one's neighbor." Make a beginning.

3. We found evidences of America's concern for India in the amount of powdered milk and wheat and medicine and other aids given. But what more can the Christian Church offer to our Indian brothers?

4. Is Christianity today only "a support to our weakness, companion to our loneliness, counselor to our neuroticisms, and heavenly confirmer of our national purpose"? If not, how would you refute each point?

5. "Courageous obedient action on social problems ranges from social service to the bigger issues of war and peace and the tensions that are found in many human societies." Comment on this statement, and draw some conclusions.

6. Is there any evidence around you which indicates the traditional religions have failed to provide vital service to the actual need of people, to satisfy their minds and souls as to the source and purpose of their lives? What can be done about it now by you?

7. Review how the churches in your community have come together through common service.

8. How do accelerated technological and social changes, racial and ethnic tensions, international relations, armaments and world peace, offer new opportunities for Christian service in the modern world?

9. Do you agree with the renowned sociologist who asserted that it has become "utterly impossible" for the Christian Church to stay aloof from the social changes of the 20th century? Get down to cases where you live.

10. How is ecumenical oneness related to injustice, discrimination, and oppression of basic human liberties? What are some of the local forms of significant ecumenical witness and service in these areas?

11. Discuss this statement of a German Christian: "The building of a wall across a city, dividing families and churches, and driving humble people to desperate acts, is something which no Christian can condone," on the ground that "no nation has a right to use the people of another nation as tools for their own

interest." Is the "Declaration of Universal Human Rights" related to this statement?

12. Give examples of men who have "put their faith and hope in science rather than in God." Has their sense of moral responsibility been diminished thereby?

13. Can we conscientiously encourage any Christian to be active in politics, believing he can witness to his Christian faith in such political service?

14. The churches should lead public opinion, not merely reflect it. What leadership has your parish provided in the struggle against discrimination and segregation?

15. What problems in our society can best or only be explored by Christians as individuals, in labor, perhaps?

16. Do you agree with this philosophy: "Avoid all entanglements, lock your heart up safe in the coffin of your selfishness"? Is there a more Christian way? Spell it out in detail.

On the Message

Since the "Message" sums up the mood and content of the Assembly, it is important to examine almost every phrase and idea in it. Reread it slowly and mark the passages for serious consideration by your study group, ready for action at every point applicable to the local situation.

1. Think of the implications of the phrase: "Christianity now has a home in every part of the world."

2. What is the difference in meaning between "brother Christian" and "brother man"?

3. Give examples of how young people engage in costly personal service "in their spontaneous offering of themselves." Work camps, perhaps?

4. Take to heart this statement: "Let us everywhere find out the things which in each place we can do together now; and faithfully do them."

5. How reads your "letter from Christ to his world"?

6. Has this statement yet become operative among you? "Now we return to our churches to do, with you, the things that have been shown to us."

Audio-Visuals

Asian Assembly, a 53-frame color filmstrip, produced by the British Council of Churches. \$4.00 postpaid, with reading script.

New Delhi 1962, a set of 30 colored slides by the Reverend Bradford Young. With reading script \$10.00.

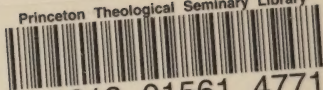
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Colophon

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CENTRAL COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE

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SECRETARIAT**

NEW YORK

GENEVA

EAST ASIA

INFORMATION

FINANCE

**ECUMENICAL
ACTION**
Youth Laity
Men and Women
Ecumenical
Institute

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CHURCHES
ON
INTERNATIONAL
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**MISSION
AND
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